

THE
MORALITY
OF
SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMA
ILLUSTRATED

BY
Mrs. Griffith

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EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SHAKESPEARE

No. 14

General Editor : Professor Arthur Freeman, Boston University

The Morality of Shakespeare's Drama Illustrated

A complete list of titles in this series
is included at the end of this volume.

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PREFACE

Elizabeth Griffith's Shakespearean criticism has in general been lightly dismissed, and for good reason. Obsessed with a systematically 'moral' approach to the plays, she knew only Johnson to praise among her own predecessors; she found Falstaff's dismissal 'noble', *King Lear* ultimately preferable in Tate's version, and Polonius 'engaging . . . quite *respectable*', and his part 'wasted' on a comic actor. The Greek Council in *Troilus* is not only admirable, but 'surpasses anything in Homer', and Gloucester's speech about gods, flies, and wanton boys in *Lear* is 'impious'. But as Ralli suggests, 'her virtues are her own, her faults those of her age', and the curious blend of reactionary with apparently anticipatory judgement—Gloucester against Prince Hal, for example—stems primarily from her tendentious, persistent subjection of all text to uniformly 'moral' formulae, without attention to context, dramatic method, or varying characterizational intent. As formally rigid as the neo-Aristotelians, she lacked their learning; as didactically concerned as Johnson, she missed sadly his common sense. Yet in the obstinate application of her particular 'method' Mrs. Griffith, perhaps simply by luck, happened upon a few ideas both new and significantly in advance of her time: she is the first, it seems, to recognize Shakespeare's practice of employing 'wise fools', and remarkably early to praise his skill in delineating women 'naturally'. And as if to bring a near-century of criticism full circle, she

PREFACE

emphatically designates *Othello*, the play Rymer chose to exemplify the defects of Shakespearean dramatic poetry, as 'the last [*sic*] and greatest effort of our Author's genius', which 'may, therefore, be looked upon as the *chef d'oeuvre* of dramatic composition'.

Mrs. Griffith (?1720–1793) grew up in Ireland, where she failed on the stage, and upon emigration to London turned writer; she is generally characterized less as bluestocking than hack, churning out novels, plays, translations and 'familiar letters'—even her love-letters to her scapegrace husband before marriage, and his to her, emerged jointly in print in 1757—principally for the sustenance of herself and her numerous kin. Garrick, to whom this most ambitious of her works is dedicated, sponsored several of her plays at Covent Garden between 1765 and 1780, at least two with considerable success, and as a playwright she may best be remembered.

The Morality of Shakespeare's Drama Illustrated is reprinted from a copy of the first edition in the possession of the Publishers, dismantled by the General Editor, and compared with three copies in the British Museum. It collates [Portrait] A–Ll⁸, with no cancels. Reprints appeared at Dublin (two vols., 12^{mo}) and at London, both in 1777.

June, 1970

A. F.



SHAKESPEARE,

Ob. an. 1616. Ætat. 53.

T H E
M O R A L I T Y
O F
SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMA
I L L U S T R A T E D.

By MRS. GRIFFITH.

Ille per extantum funem mihi posse videtur
Ire poëta, meum qui pectus inaniter angit ;
Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
Ut magus ; et modò me Thebis, modò ponit Athenis.
HOR.



L O N D O N :
Printed for T. CADELL, in the Strand.
MDCCLXXV.

T H E

T E M P E S T.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

ALONZO, King of Naples.

SEBASTIAN, his Brother.

FERDINAND, Son to the King of Naples.

PROSPERO, rightful Duke of Milan.

GONZALO, an honest old Courtier of Naples.

TRINCULO, a Jester.

ARIEL, an airy Spirit.

CALIBAN, a savage, and deformed Slave.

W O M E N.

MIRANDA, Daughter of Prospero.

N. B. It is to be observed, that in this and all the other Dramatis Personæ, I insert the names of those only whom I have brought upon the Scene, in the course of these remarks, either as speaking themselves, or being spoken to by others.

T O

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

THERE is no person whose patronage a Work of this kind may so properly claim, as Your's ; Your private life having done so much honour to the moral part, and Your public one such justice to the principal Characters, represented in our Author's writings.

Your action has been a better comment on his Text, than all his Editors have been able to supply. You mark his beauties ; They but clear his blots. You impress us with the living spirit ; They only present us the dead letter.

There is one striking similarity between Shakespeare and You, in a very uncommon particular : He is the only Dramatic Writer, who ever alike ex-

celled in Tragedy and Comedy ; and we may without flattery venture to affirm, That you are the only Performer who ever appeared with equal advantage, both in the Sock and Buskin.

If I had an higher opinion of this Work than I have, I should have still but an higher inducement for addressing it to You. From this consideration You are bound to receive it, *with all its imperfections on its head*, being offered as a tribute of that friendship and esteem with which I have the honour to be,

S I R,

Your much obliged,

and most obedient Servant,

November 1,
1774.

E. G.

P R E F A C E.

AMONG the many writers of our nation, who have by their talents contributed to entertain, inform, or improve our minds, no one has so happily or universally succeeded, as he whom we may justly stile our first, our greatest Poet, Shakespeare. For more than a century and a half, this Author has been the delight of the Ingenious, the text of the Moralist, and the study of the Philosopher. Even his cotemporary writers have ingenuously yielded their plaudit to his fame, as not presuming it could lessen theirs, set at so great a distance. Such superior excellence could never be brought into a comparative light; and jealousy is dumb, when competition must be vain. For him, then, they chearfully twined the laurel-wreath, and unrepining placed it on his brow; where it will ever bloom, while sense, taste, and natural feelings of the heart, shall remain amongst the characteristics of this, or any other nation, that can be able to construe his language. He is a Classic, and cotemporary with all ages.

True Nature's Drama represents all time;
Though old the last, the first retains its prime.

But amidst all this burst of applause, one single discordant voice is faintly heard. Voltaire has stood forth his opponent. One might imagine such a writer to have had taste enough to relish his *poetical beauties*, at least, tho' possibly some doubt might arise about his sympathy with his *moral ones*. But he unfairly tries him by Pédant laws, which our Author either did not know, or regarded not. His compositions are a distinct species of the Drama; and not being an imitation of the Greek one, cannot be justly said to have infringed its rules. Shakespeare is a *model*, not a *copy*; he looked into nature, not into books, both for men and works. 'Tis learned ignorance, therefore, to quote the antient exemplars against him. Is there no spring inspired, but Aganippe's font? No raptured vision, but on Parnassus' mount? The Grecian Bards themselves had conceived a more liberal notion, in this particular, who, by making *Phæbus* the God of Poetry, seem to have acknowledged inspiration to be universal.

But as it may shew more impartiality upon this subject, to oppose one French authority to another, I shall here quote against M. Voltaire, the Abbé Le Blanc's opinion of our Author, in his *Letters on the English Nation*, written to his Friend. “ He is, says he, of all Writers, antient or modern, the most of an original. “ He is truly a great genius, and Nature has “ endowed him with powers to shew it. His “ imagination is rich and strong: he paints “ whatever he sees, and embellishes whatever “ he describes. The Loves in the train of Venus are not represented with more grace, in “ the

“ the Pictures of Albanus, than this Poet gives
 “ to those that attend on Cleopatra, in his de-
 “ scription of the pomp with which that Queen
 “ presents herself to Mark Antony, on the
 “ banks of the Cydnus.

“ The reputation of this Author is so great,
 “ that I shall not be surprized if you suspect
 “ me of exaggeration in this account of him.
 “ Those of our nation who have ever men-
 “ tioned him, have been content to praise, *with-*
 “ *out being capable of judging sufficiently of his*
 “ *merits.*”

To the further honour of our Author be it
 said, that a Lady * of distinguished merit has
 lately appeared a champion in his cause, against
 this *minor critic*, this *minute philosopher*, this *fly*
upon a pillar of St. Paul's. It was her example
 which has stirred up my emulation to this at-
 tempt; for I own that I am ambitious of the
 honour of appearing to think, at least, though I
 despair of the success of writing, like her.

Mr. Pope, in the Preface to his edition of
 this Author, says, “ Of all the English Poets,
 “ Shakespeare must be confessed to be the fairest
 “ and fullest subject for Criticism, and to afford
 “ the most numerous, as well as most conspi-
 “ cuous, instances, both of beauties and blemishes,
 “ of all sorts.” And again: “ I cannot, how-
 “ ever, but mention some of his principal and
 “ characteristic excellencies; for which, not-
 “ withstanding his defects, he is justly and
 “ deservedly elevated above all other Dra-
 “ matic Writers.”

* Mrs Montagu.

He might have added the following observation, from Longinus, to his remarks, who says, that “ In reading Homer, Plato, or any other of the great geniuses of antiquity ; whenever we happen to meet with passages which appear to be unintelligible or absurd, we ought fairly to conclude, that were they alive to explain themselves in those places, we should to our confusion be convinced, that the ignorance or error lay in our own conceptions alone.” Horace, too, may be referred to upon this occasion, who indulgently says, that *The blaze of fine writing gilds o’er its blots.* Such was the candor, such the modesty, and such the deference, shewn by Antient Commentators to the works of literature or genius. The brightness of the sun concealed its spots from them ; but second-hand critics, to speak in the words of a modern Author, *peer through a smoked glass to observe them.*

The learned and ingenious Doctor Johnson has given us a just and beautiful simile, on this subject : “ The works of a correct and regular writer, says he, is a garden accurately formed, and diligently planted ; varied with shades, and scented by flowers. The composition of Shakespeare is a forest, in which oaks extend their branches, and pines tower in the air, interspersed sometimes with weeds and brambles, and sometimes affording shelter to myrtles and roses ; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endless diversity.”

This last-mentioned Editor is the only one who has considered Shakespeare’s writings in a
moral

moral light; and therefore I confess myself of opinion that he has best understood them, by thus pointing to their highest merit, and noblest excellence. And from several passages in the Doctor's Preface, particularly where he says, that "From his writings, indeed, a system of *social duties* may be selected; for he who "thinks reasonably, must think *morally*;" as well as from frequent reflections of my own, respecting the æconomical conduct of life and manners, which have always arisen in my mind on the perusal of Shakespeare's works, I have ventured to assume the task of placing his Ethic merits in a more conspicuous point of view, than they have ever hitherto been presented in to the Public.

My difficulty will not be *what to find*, but *what to chuse*, amidst such a profusion of sweets, and variety of colours; nay, sometimes, how to separate the moral from the matter, in this Author's writings; which are often so contexted, that, to continue Doctor Johnson's allegory above quoted, they may be compared to an intermixture of the physic with the kitchen garden, where both food and medicine may be culled from the same spot.

Shakespeare is not only my Poet, but my Philosopher also. His anatomy of the human heart is delineated from *nature*, not from *metaphysics*; referring immediately to our intuitive sense, and not wandering with the schoolmen, through the pathless wilds of theory. We not only *see*, but *feel* his dissections just and scientific.—The late ingenious Lord Lyttelton, speaking of Sakespeare, says, "No author had
" ever

“ ever so copious, so bold, so creative an imagination, with so perfect a knowledge of the passions, the humours, and sentiments of mankind. He painted all characters, from heroes and kings, down to inn-keepers and peasants, with equal truth, and equal force. If human nature were quite destroyed, and no monument left of it, except his Works, other Beings might learn what man was, from those writings *.” And Ben Johnson had long before said of him :

“ Nature herself was proud of his designs,

“ And joyed to wear the dressings of his lines.”

Shakespeare seems to possess that happy and peculiar kind of superiority over all other Dramatic Authors, that the ancient poets and historians confessedly bear above the modern ones, with regard to the genuine characters, manners, and sentiments, of the persons exhibited in their respective writings. In the first, we see the *men of Nature*; in the latter, but the *children of the Schools*.

The world at present is held more in trammels, than it formerly was.—From our modes of education, policies, and breeding, our conduct and demeanor are become more sophisticated, our minds less candid, and our actions more disguised. Our modern literary painters represent us such as we appear; but the genuine unadulterate heart can be moved by no affection, allied by no sympathy, with such factitious personages, such puppets of polity, such automata of modern refinement. Hence, love, friendship, patriotism, are long since be-

* Dialogues of the Dead.

come the obsolete sentiments of chivalry and romance. But in all the representations of Shakespeare, we are sensible of a connection; his whole Dramatis Personæ seem to be *our acquaintance and countrymen*; while in most other exhibitions, they appear to be *strangers and foreigners*. Doctor Johnson, upon comparing the Tragedy of Cato with one of our Author's plays, says justly, that "Addison speaks the language of *Poets*, but Shakespeare that of *Men*."

Doctor Warburton says, "Of all the literary exertions of speculative men, whether designed for the use or entertainment of the world, there are none of so much importance, or what are more of our immediate concern, than those which let us into a knowledge of our nature. Others may exercise the reason, or amuse the imagination; but these only can improve the heart, and form the mind to wisdom. Now, in this science our Shakespeare is confessed to occupy the foremost place; whether we consider the amazing sagacity with which he investigates every hidden spring and wheel of human action; or his happy manner of communicating this knowledge, in the just and lively paintings which he has given us of all our passions, appetites, and pursuits. These afford a lesson, which can never be too often repeated, or too strongly inculcated."

Shaftsbury, though severe, I think rather too much so, against Shakespeare's faults, allows, that "By the justness of his moral, the
" aptness

“ aptness of his descriptions, and the plain
“ and natural turn of several of his characters,
“ he pleases his audience, and gains their ear,
“ *without a single bribe from luxury or vice.*”

Our Author's poetical beauties have been already selected, though they needed it not, as they are undoubtedly so striking as scarcely to require the being particularly pointed out to any Reader capable of conceiving or relishing them; but a single line, sometimes a word, in many instances throughout his Works, may convey a hint, or impress a sentiment upon the heart, if properly marked, which might possibly be overlooked, while curiosity is attending to the fable, or the imagination transported with the splendor of diction, or sublimity of images.

There is a Moral sometimes couched in his Fable, which whenever I have been able to discover, I have pointed out to the Reader; and from those pieces where this excellence is deficient in the Argument, as particularly in his Historical Plays, where poetical justice cannot always obtain, human life not being the whole of our existence, I have given his moral and instruction in detail, by quoting the passages as they happen to lie detached, or referring to the scope and tenor of the dialogue.

In these remarks and observations I have not restricted myself to morals purely ethic, but have extended my observations and reflections to whatever has reference to the general œconomy of life and manners, respecting prudence, polity, decency, and decorum; or relative to the
tender

tender affections and fond endearments of human nature ; more especially regarding those moral duties which are the truest source of mortal bliss—domestic ties, offices, and obligations.

This code of morality has an advantage over any other of the kind, on account of its not being conducted systematically. In all books that treat upon these subjects, the precepts are disposed methodically, under separate heads or chapters ; as Ambition, Bravery, Constancy, Devotion, and so on to the end of the alphabet ; which mode, though useful on account of references, or as a common-place book, cannot be near so entertaining, and consequently so well able to answer the *utile dulci*, as a work of this sort, where the documents rise out of the action immediately before our eyes, and are constantly varying with the quick shifting of scenes, person, and subjects ; where love sometimes follows war, jealousy succeeds friendship, parsimony liberality ; and so proceeding throughout the intire *quicquid agunt homines* of human life.

E R R A T A.

Page 2, line last but 4, read, *referable*, and next line, strike out *to the Reader*.

P. 95, l. 20, r. *fire-new*.

P. 96, l. last of the text, r. *grofs*.

P. 112, l. last but one, r. *you're*.

P. 160, l. 11, of the speech, first word, for *And*, r. *As*.

P. 212, l. 24, r. *proffer*.

P. 264, before Scene II. r. Act IV.

P. 352, l. last but 12, for the two last words, r. *an in—*,

P. 354, l. 28, after *sisters* put a period.

P. 382, l. last but one, after *such*, add *a*, and last word, for *they*,
r. *when*.

P. 440, l. 5, r. *fit*.

P. 458, l. last but 12, r. *lachrymose*.

P. 255, l. 18, r. *bays*.

T H E
M O R A L I T Y
O F
SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMA
I L L U S T R A T E D.

The T E M P E S T.

THIS Play, and the Midsummer Night's Dream, which in all the latter editions immediately follows it, are considered by Dr. Warburton, "as the noblest effort of that sublime and amazing imagination, peculiar to Shakespeare, which soars above the bounds of Nature, without forsaking Sense; or, more properly, carries Nature along with it, beyond her terrestrial limits."

He has, indeed, in both these exhibitions, created Beings out of all visible existence; or, as he has himself most beautifully expressed it,

" Given to airy Nothing

" A local habitation, and a name."

Yet by the powers of his genius has he contrived to make these chimeras of his brain think, act, and speak, in a manner which appears so suited to the anomalous personages his magic has conjured up, that

B

we

we readily adopt them into the scale of Nature, from a presumption, that were they really to exist, they would probably resemble the characters which his wand has endowed them with.

These two plays are generally supposed to have been the first and second of his writing; though I believe there are no dates remaining, to confirm this opinion; which can therefore be founded only on the idea, that his youthful imagination must naturally be thought to have been more sportive and exuberant, than his riper judgment might have permitted the indulgence of. And here, indeed,

“ She wantons, as in her prime,

“ And plays at will her virgin fancies :”

though, if I may be allowed the liberty of a criticism about this matter, I should be rather inclined to suppose this Play to have been one of his latter performances, as all the *unities* are so strictly preserved in it.

But though both these pieces possess all the *lesser merits* of poetry, they are not so much suited to the purpose of my present undertaking, especially the second, as several others of the same author; for the most material events, in both, being principally conducted by *machinery*, or supernatural agency, produce rather astonishment than reflection: so that unless we adopt Dr. Johnson's remark, in the first scene of the Tempest, “ it may be observed of Gonzalo, that being the “ only good man that appears with the King, he is “ the only one who preserves his cheerfulness in the “ wreck, or his hope on the island,” there is not so much to be collected from them, as I could wish, to be placed to the score of Morality. However, all that can be extracted from either, referrible to this head, shall be diligently pointed out to the reader. With this view I shall lay the Fable of this Play before my reader, for the sake of the Moral, which may be so fairly deduced from it.

Prospero,

Prospero, a duke of Milan, having been expelled his dominion, by the usurpation of his brother Anthonio, confederated with Alonzo, a king of Naples, is committed to the mercy of the winds and waves, in a rotten bark, accompanied only by his daughter, Miranda, a child of three years old; but has had the good fortune to escape, and be landed on an uninhabited island; where the first scene is laid, and the intire action continued, during the whole representation.

About twelve years after this event, Anthonio, with Alonzo, Ferdinand his son, and other attendants, being on a voyage together, are driven out of their course, by a storm, and wrecked upon this island, but escape alive on shore; where the Prince, meeting with Miranda, falls in love with her, and a reciprocal passion is conceived on her part, also.

Prospero, having thus got his enemies within his power, on their repentance, generously forgives them their cruelty and injustice, recovers his dukedom again, and the marriage of the lovers confirms an alliance on both sides.

From this short story I think the following *general Moral* will naturally result: That the ways, the justice, and the goodness of Providence, are so frequently manifested towards mankind, even in this life, that it should ever encourage an honest and a guiltless mind to form hopes, in the most forlorn situations; and ought also to warn the wicked never to rest assured in the false confidence of wealth or power, against the natural abhorrence of vice, both in God and man.

Many of the unforeseen events of life, which appear to us but accident or contingency, may possibly be parts of the secret workings of Providence,

“ All chance direction which we cannot see ;”

and have oftener been remarked rather as chastisements of vice, than as reliefs from misery. We are

sensible in our own nature, of a stronger impulse to resent the first, than even to commiserate the latter. How much higher, then, must this sentiment rise, in the Author of that very nature! In wretchedness there is no contagion; 'tis but particular and temporary: the effects of vice are general and eternal.

Part of a speech in this play may be better quoted here, than elsewhere, as it refers so immediately to this subject.

A R I E L, *speaking to the Conspirators.*

But remember,
For that's my business to you, that you three
From Milan did supplant good Prospero;
Exposed unto the sea, which hath requit it,
Him and his innocent child; for which foul deed,
The Powers, *delaying, not forgetting*, have
Incensed the seas and shores, yea, all the creatures,
Against your peace. Thee, of thy son, Alonzo,
'They have bereft; and do pronounce, by me,
Lingering perdition, worse than any death
Can be at once, shall step by step attend
You and your ways; whose wrath to guard you from,
(Which here in this most desolate isle else falls
Upon your heads) is nothing but *heart's sorrow*,
And a clear life ensuing *.

*

*

*

Let us now proceed to the particular maxims and sentiments which occur from the several parts of the Dialogue.

A C T I. S C E N E II.

Miranda, speaking of the shipwreck, thus expresses her sympathetic feelings for the wretched.

O! I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer: A brave vessel,
(Who had, no doubt, some noble creatures in her)
Dash'd all to pieces. O! *the cry did knock*
Against my very heart. Poor souls, they perish'd!
Had I been any God of power, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth, or ere
It should the *good ship* so have swallowed, and
The freighted souls within her.

* Act III. Scene iv.

There

T H E T E M P E S T.

There is something in the fond expression of *good ship*, in the last line but one, which strikes me with an idea of a peculiar tenderness in her compassion for the unhappy sufferers.

* * *

Prospero, confessing the mad folly of trusting his reins of administration into other hands, says,

The Government I cast upon my brother,
And to my State grew stranger.

And again, speaking of the same person,

Being once perfected how to grant suits,
How to deny them; whom to advance, and whom
To trash for over-topping; new created
The creatures that were mine; I say, or changed them,
Or else new formed them; having both the key
Of officer and office, set all things in the state
To what tune pleased his ear; *that now he was*
The ivy which had hid my princely trunk,
And sucked my verdure out on't.

In continuation,

And my trust,
Like a good parent, did beget of him
A falsehood in its contrary as great
As my trust was; which had, indeed, no limit:
A confidence *sans* bound. He being thus lorded,
Not only with what my revenue yielded,
But what my power might else exact; like one,
Who having, unto truth, by telling oft,
Made such a sinner of his memory,
To credit his own lie, he did believe
He was, indeed, the Duke; from substitution,
And executing the outward face of Royalty,
With all prerogative. Hence his ambition growing,
To have no screen between the part he played,
And him he played it for, he needs will be
Absolute Milan.

In this account of the Duke's weakness, with the natural consequences attending it, the Poet has afforded a proper lesson to princes, never to render themselves cyphers in their government, by too dangerous a confidence in their favourites; but ever to consider those persons, to whom they depute the several offices of State, as *ministers*, in the *literal* sense of the word, only, not in the *political* one.

When Prospero describes the hazards and difficulties of his forlorn voyage, Miranda tenderly exclaims,

Alack ! what trouble
Was I then to you ?

To which he, in a kind of extasy of fondness, replies,

O ! a cherubim
Thou wast, that did preserve me. Thou didst smile,
Infused with a fortitude from Heaven,
(When I have decked the sea with drops full salt ;
Under my burden groaned ;) which raised in me
An undergoing stomach, to bear up
Against what should ensue.

Here the Poet finely points to that virtue of true manhood, which serves to strengthen our fortitude and double our activity, when objects, whom the ties of Nature, or the sympathy of affections, have endeared to us, require our solace or assistance in distress or danger. While our cares center solely in ourselves, we are but *one* ; but become *two*, where the heart is shared.

*

*

*

Prospero. Here in this island we arrived, and here
Have I, thy schoolmaster, made thee more profit
Than other princes can, that have more time
For vainer hours, and tutors not so careful.

Here the too general dissipations of life are hinted at, and those parents censured, who transfer the pious duty of their children's education to mercenary preceptors ; except in the meaner articles of it, the arts, exercises, and sciences. Too few attend to the higher and more interesting charge, of forming the mind and directing the heart to their proper objects ; and fewer still, in deputing it to others, seem to regard the chief requisites, of character, or capacity. in those they intrust with this office, looking upon competent scholarship to be alone sufficient.

But a liberal education, as far as it extends in Colleges and Schools, does not always give a liberal mind ;

mind; and as example is allowed to exceed precept, so do those sentiments and principles which we imbibe in youth from the living manners of our tutors,

“ Grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength.”

Those only are capable of sinking into the heart, and imbuing the mind, while mere didactic maxims remain a load upon the memory alone. The first only *inspire us how to act*, the latter but *instruct us how to speak*.

* * *

Prospero. And by my prescience
I find, my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star; whose influence
If now I court not, but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop.

This passage furnishes a prudent and necessary reflection to the mind of the reader, that man's success in life often depends upon some lucky and critical occasion, which, suffered to slip by, may ne'er return again. Shakespeare expresses himself more fully on this subject, in another place*. Some other poet too presents us with a poetical image to the same purpose, where he says that “ opportunity is *“ bald behind †.”*

SCENE III.

Prospero to Ariel.

Dost thou forget
From what a torment I did free thee?

Doctor Johnson, in a note upon this passage, has given us the traditionary system of the Hebrews relative to the Fallen Angels; which has afforded me a hint, that tempts me to consider the tenor of this scene in a more interesting light, by observing upon the impatience of Ariel, a condemned spirit, claiming, under his servitude, the *promised redemption*, before he had fulfilled the commands of his master. This allusion, whether Shakespeare intended it or no, is so obvious, that there would not require the

* “ There is a tide in the affairs of men,” &c.

JUL. CÆs. Act iv. Scene 5.

† Post occasio calva.

THE TEMPEST.

alteration of a syllable, to have it inserted among the *Mysteries* *. Men would be Christians upon their own terms, only, and are too apt to think that *faith and fear*, without *love or works*, are sufficient for the purpose.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Gonzalo, comforting and cheering up the spirits of his companions in the wreck, speaks with a becoming resignation and proper gratitude towards Providence :

Beseech you, Sir, be merry—you have cause,
So have we all, of joy! for our escape
Is much beyond our loss : our hint of woe
Is common : every day some sailor's wife,
The master of some merchant, and the merchant,
Have just our theme of woe : But for the miracle,
I mean our preservation, few in millions
Can speak like us : *Then wisely, good Sir, weigh
Our sorrow with our comfort.*

*

*

*

An uncouth or severe manner of giving reproof, or offering advice, is very justly, and with equal good sense and tenderness, reflected upon by Gonzalo, in the following passage :

My lord Sebastian,
The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness,
And time to speak it in. You rub the sore,
When you should bring the plaister.

SCENE II.

Trinculo most humourously ridicules the passion of the English for strange sights, in the following reflection, on seeing Caliban lying asleep on the ground, whom he takes for a dead sea-monster, just cast ashore by the working of the waves.

“ Were I in England, now, as once I was, and had but this fish
“ painted, not a holy-day fool there but would give a piece of
“ silver. There would this monster *make a man* ; any strange beast
“ there *makes a man*. When they will not give a doit to relieve a
“ lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian.”

* Antient Dramatic exhibitions, so called ; usually performed by the priests in the 13th and 14th centuries, upon public theatres, in which the several dispensations of the Gospel were profanely represented.

Not,

Not, however, that this foible can fairly be induced against us, as a national reflection, by any means; for it is not peculiar to this, or any other particular people, but will be found to be the common disposition and idle curiosity of mankind, in general. There is another piece of sarcasm, also, thrown out, in the same speech, as unjust as the former: *When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar.* No nation on the globe is more distinguished for charity, humanity, and benevolence, than the English are, at present. And this must have been always their characteristic; for manners may refine, but cannot create, virtues. Polishing may give taste, but feelings come from nature.

* * *

After Trinculo has recovered from his fright, and finds Caliban to be but an harmless savage, so very simple as to believe Stephano to be the Man in the Moon; he says,

“ By this good light, this is a very shallow monster—*I afraid of him?* a very shallow monster. The man i'th' Moon? a most poor “ credulous monster.”

'Tis to be observed, here, that he was not charged with having been afraid, nor did any one know of it, but himself; and it was this very consciousness that forced such a bravado from him. This is Doctor Warburton's remark. 'Tis a just one, and may be rendered general, by observing, that, upon all occasions, too prompt a defence of ourselves, is a sort of self-accusation.

A C T I I I . S C E N E I .

Ferdinand's first speech, here, prettily expresses that kind of cheerfulness with which a person undertakes labour, or executes the meanest or most irksome offices, for their *second-self*, for those they love.

There be some sports are painful, but their labour
Delight in them sets off; some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone; and most poor matters

Point

Point to rich ends. This my mean task would be
 As heavy to me, as 'tis odious; but
The mistress which I serve, quickens what's dead,
And makes my labour pleasure.—My sweet mistress
 Weeps when she sees me work, and says, such baseness
 Had ne'er like executer. I forget—
 But those sweet thoughts do even refresh my labour,
 Most busy-lefs, when I do it.

The above speech has something of the same
 turn and spirit in it, with that of Prospero, in
 the second Scene of the First Act, already observed
 upon.

SCENE IV.

The horrors and upbraidings of a wounded con-
 science, are finely painted in the latter part of this
 scene :

Alonso. O ! it is monstrous ! monstrous !

Methought the billows spoke, and told me of it ;
The winds did sing it to me ; and the thunder,
That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounced
The name of Prosper. It did bask my trespass.

Gonzalo. All three of them are desperate ; *their great guilt,*
Like poison given to work a great time after,
Now 'gins to bite the spirits.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A chaste conduct between betrothed lovers, is
 strongly urged, and sanctified, by severe maledic-
 tions, and very natural predictions, in the follow-
 ing passages :

Prospero, giving his daughter to Ferdinand.

Then as my gift, and thine own acquisition,
 Worthily purchased, take my daughter. But
 If thou dost break her virgin knot, before
 All sanctimonious ceremonies may
 With full and holy rite be ministered,
 No sweet aspersions shall the heavens let fall
 To make this contract grow : but barren hate,
 Sour-eyed disdain, and discord, shall bestrew
 The union of your bed with weeds so loathly,
 That you shall hate it both. Therefore take heed,
 As Hymen's lamps shall light you—

Ferdinand's reply.

As I hope

For quiet days, fair issue, and long life,

With

With such love as 'tis now ; the murkiest den,
The most opportune place, and strongest suggestion
Our worser Genius can, shall never melt
Mine honour into lust, to take away
The edge of that day's celebration,
When I shall think that Phœbus' steeds are foundered,
Or night kept chained below—

A little after, old Prospero, being better acquainted with the fallibilities of human nature than the young lovers were, repeats the same caution to Ferdinand, again :

Look, thou be true ; do not give dalliance
Too much the rein ; the strongest oaths are straw
To th' fire i' th' blood ; be more abstemious,
Or else, good night, your vow !

To which Ferdinand answers, as before,

I warrant you, Sir ;
The white, cold, virgin-snow upon my heart
Abates the ardour of my liver.

S C E N E I V.

There is a beautiful, but humiliating reflection on the inconsiderableness of life and grandeur, made by Prospero, in this scene, which is worthy of being added to the *golden verses of Pythagoras*, and ought to be placed in gilt characters, as an inscription, on all the palaces, monuments, or triumphal arches of the earth.

Our revels now are ended—These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all Spirits, and
Are melted into air, into *thin air* * ;
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack † behind ! *We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.*

A C T V. S C E N E I.

The feelings and sentiments of humanity, with the nobleness of remission upon repentance, are here finely and most affectingly touched.

* Æther.

† Rack, the most rarified part of a cloud, detached from it, and floating in an higher region. Ariel

Ariel to Prospero..

The king,
His brother, and yours, abide all three distracted;
And the remainder mourning over them,
Brimfull of sorrow and dismay; but chiefly,
Him that you termed the good old lord Gonzalo;
*His tears run down his beard, like winter drops
From eaves of reeds; your charm so strongly works them,
That if you now beheld them, your affections
Would become tender.*

Prospero. Dost thou think so, Spirit?

Ariel. *Mine would, sir, were I human.*

Prospero. And mine shall.

Haft thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling
Of their afflictions, and shall not myself,
*One of their kind, that relish all as sharply,
Passion'd as they, be kindlier mov'd than thou art?*
Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick,
*Yet with my nobler reason, 'gainst my fury
Do I take part. The rarer action is
In virtue than in vengeance.* They being penitent,
The sole drift of my purpose doth extend
Not a frown further. Go, release them, Ariel;
My charms I'll break, their senses I'll restore,
And they shall be themselves.

This last passage closes the moral scene of the piece most beautifully; in rising, by degrees, to the summit of all Ethic and Christian virtue, humanity and forgiveness. I shall, therefore, also conclude my remarks upon this performance, with an allusion to a passage in Horace, where he draws a contrast between Mævius and Homer, which is perfectly applicable to our author, when compared with almost any other Dramatic writer who has ever attempted the marvellous:

“ One with a flash begins, and ends in smoke;
“ The other out of smoke brings glorious light,
“ And without raising expectation high,
“ Surprizes us with dazzling miracles.”

Roscommon's Translation of the Art of Poetry.

A

M I D S U M M E R

N I G H T's D R E A M.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

THESEUS, Duke of Athens.

LYSANDER, in love with Hermia.

DEMETRIUS, in love with Hermia.

PHILOSTRATE, Master of the Sports to Theseus.

OBERON, King of the Fairies.

PUCK, a Fairy.

W O M E N.

HIPPOLITA, Princess of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.

HERMIA, Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.

HELENA, in love with Demetrius.

A

Midsummer Night's Dream.

I Shall not trouble my readers with the Fable of this piece, as I can see no general moral that can be deduced from the Argument; nor, as I hinted before *, is there much sentiment to be collected even from the Dialogue. But whatever harvest can be gleaned from this unfruitful field, I shall endeavour to pick up, as becomes a faithful steward of the farm.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Theseus to Hermia.

*To you your father should be as a God,
One that composed your beauties; yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax
By him imprinted; and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.*

In this speech, the pious notion of the Antients, with regard to this relation, while genuine Nature was their sole Preceptor, is fully expressed. Here the duty of children to their parents, is indeed carried to the height; and yet, methinks, not at all too far. They are the objects of our earliest affections, of our first deference, of our primary obligations. Even superstition, in this case, as far at least as implicit obedience extends, exceeds not true devotion.

The Decalogue was originally written on Two Tables; five in each. The first refers solely to Religion; the second, to Morality, only. To honour our parents, therefore, as falling within the former line of obligations, is, by this distinction, made one

* Preface to the Tempest, paragraph 4th.

of our *pious* duties ; as through them we honour the Creator, who ordained this relation between us. This precept, then, should seem to have a double tie upon us, as partaking both of *piety* and *morals* ; and therefore, however the latter bond may chance to be cancelled, the first ought never to be dispensed with.

In fine, there is something so fond and endearing in the idea and exercise of a child's obedience and deference towards a parent, that how rotten must the root be, or how blighted the branches, if such a tree should fail of producing its natural fruit !

Thus far, by way of general reflection, only ; for I must, notwithstanding, admit, that the particular instance of the daughter's compliance, exacted by the father, in this piece, of resigning an husband of her own choice, *upon equal terms*, and accepting another, chosen arbitrarily for her, *by caprice merely*, was too severe a trial of obedience. Egeus here, like Abraham, would sacrifice his child at the altar, not only without the command of God, but contrary to his express purpose, proclaimed aloud by the voice of Nature, and further confirmed from the deductions of virtuous affection, free will, and rational election.

When I said that the duty of a child was *natural*, I did not mean to invest the parent with an authority which *was not so* ; and I cannot blame Hermia, therefore, upon the severe laws of Athens being declared to her, for the chaste and spirited resolution she frames to herself on that occasion.

So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship ; *to whose unwished yoke*
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

S C E N E II.

Lyfander, the suitor elect of Hermia, here makes an observation upon the state of love, which is too often verified in life : That a sympathy of affections,
with

with other fitness of circumstances, are seldom found to meet together, so as to compleat an happy union.

Lysander. Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
 Could ever hear, by tale or history,
 The course of true love never did run smooth;
 But either it was different in blood—
 Or else misgrafted in respect of years—
 Or else it stood upon the choice of friends—
 Or if there were a sympathy in choice,
 War, Death, or Sicknefs did lay siege to it;
 Making it momentary as a sound,
 Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,
 Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
 That in a spleen * unfolds both heaven and earth,
 And ere a man hath power to say, Behold!
 The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
 So quick bright things come to confusion!

SCENE III.

In this scene we are charmed with that mildness, modesty, and generous eulogium, with which the fond and unhappy Helena accosts a rival beauty, and woo'd by the man she loves.

Hermia. God speed, fair Helena! whither away?

Helena. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay;
 Demetrius loves you, fair—O happy fair!
 Your eyes are load-stars †, and your tongue's sweet air
 More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
 When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
 Sicknefs is catching—Oh! were favour so!
 Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
 My ear should catch your voice; my eye your eye;
 My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
 Were the world mine, Demetrius being 'bated,
 The rest I'd give to be to you translated—
 O teach me how you look, and with what art
 You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart!

* *Spleen*, for a sudden or hasty fit.

† The *polar star*, by which mariners are guided in their course.

Hermia had used no arts, no coquetry, to allure her lover from her ; for, as she expresses it, just after, in the same dialogue,

His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

She had, indeed, happened to have done her an *injury*, but *no wrong* ; and therefore the forsaken maid shews her justice in plaining her own ill fortune, only, without expressing the least manner of resentment against her unoffending rival.

Hermia, in the same scene, alludes to the magic power of love, which concentrates all our ideas in one, making us prefer a cottage to a palace, and a desert to a grove, according to the situation or circumstances of the object of our affections. After having declared the purpose of flying her country with her lover, she adds,

Before the time I did Lyfander see,
Seemed Athens like a Paradise to me.
O then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turned a heaven into hell ?

And Helena, afterwards, carries on the same idea, in the following lines :

Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity.
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind ;
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind ;
Nor hath love's mind of any judgment taste :
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste,
And therefore is love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.

Theseus too, in a passage of his speech, in the first Scene of the Fifth Act of this Play, accords with the above sentiment :

While the lover all as frantic
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.

And Shakespeare has hinted a moral, on this latter subject, with regard to irregular or ill-placed affection, as Dr. Warburton has justly observed, " by " as fine a metamorphosis as any in Ovid," in the last line of the following speech, in the second Scene
of

of Act the Second; the whole of which I shall transcribe here, in order to shew how justly and poetically he has pointed to the different effects of passion upon busy and contemplative minds, as well as on idle and dissipated ones.

Oberon *to* Puck.

That very time I saw, but thou could'st not,
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all armed : a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal, throned by the West *,
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts.
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quenched in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon,
And the imperial votress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy free.
Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell ;
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with Love's wound,
And maidens call it *Love in idleness*.

ACT V. SCENE I.

The deceptions of an enthusiastic or over-heated fancy, with the vain terrors of a dejected mind, are well described in part of the following speech ; in which our author classes *the lunatic, the lover, and the poet*, together ; and might have taken in the *fanatic* too, along with them, under the description of those, who, as he says, in the first part of the same speech,

Have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.

Theseus. Such tricks hath strong imagination,
'That if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy ;
Or in the night imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear ?

*

*

*

Among the *brief of sports*, as it is called, to be exhibited before Theseus, on his wedding-day, this is the title of one :

* This is meant as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth.

The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of Learning, late *deceased in beggary*.

Mr. Warton imagines this passage to have alluded to a poem of Spenser's, stiled *The Tears of the Muses, on the Neglect and Contempt of Learning*, in his time. Though this was not properly a complaint of that age, only; it has been so much the grievance of all times, that it has, long since, obtained into a proverb, *As poor as a poet*.

The case of such *unfortunate* persons,

“ Of those whom Phœbus, in his ire,

“ Hath *blasted* with poetic fire *,

is certainly very hard. Persons who apply their minds to letters, must unavoidably neglect their temporal concerns; and those who employ their time in the reformation or entertainment of the world, should be supported by it—Not by merely accidental and precarious emoluments, but upon some more permanent foundation; like the Clergy, who have had a provision made for them, for the same reason as above; and the name of *Clerk*, tho' now appropriated to the latter, was formerly the common appellation of both. The honour of such an establishment would be considerable to a State, and the expence but small—for *the numbers are but few*.

*

*

*

Thefeus expresses a just sentiment in a prince, when Philostrate, the Master of his Revels, objects to his being present at a play, which the affections of the lowest rank of the Athenian citizens had framed for the celebration of his nuptials.

Philostrate. No, my noble Lord,

It is not for you. I have heard it over,

And it is nothing; nothing in the world;

Unless you can find sport in their intents,

Extremely stretched, and conned with cruel pain,

To do you service.

* Swift.

Thefeus

Theseus. I will hear that play :
For never any thing can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.

Hippolita also makes the same objection, but from a motive of humanity, only.

I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharged,
And duty in his service perishing.

Theseus. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hippolita. He says, they can do nothing in this kind.

Theseus. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.

Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake;

And what poor duty cannot do,

Noble respect takes not in might, but merit.

Where I have come, great clerks have purposed

To greet me with premeditated welcomes ;

Where I have seen them shiver, and look pale,

Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Throttle their practised accent in their fears,

And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off,

Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, Sweet,

Out of their silence yet I picked a welcome ;

And in the modesty of fearful duty,

I read as much, as from the rattling tongue

Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity,

In least speaks most, to my capacity.

*

*

*

I must here conclude my observations on this Play, with the above beautiful passage, as there does not appear to me to be any thing else, in the remainder of it, worthy to supply a reflection relative to the purposed scope or design of this Work.

P O S T S C R I P T.

This Play is perfectly picturesque, and resembles some rich landscape, where palaces and cottages, huntsmen and husbandmen, princes and peasants, appear in the same scene together.

THE
TWO GENTLEMEN
OF
VERONA.

C 4

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

DUKE of MILAN, Father to Silvia.

VALENTINE, } the two Gentlemen.
PROTHEUS, }

ANTHONIO, Father to Protheus.

PANTHION, Servant to Anthonio.

W O M E N.

SILVIA, the Duke of Milan's Daughter, beloved of
Valentine.

JULIA, a Lady of Verona, beloved of Protheus.

THE

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

THE Fable of this Play has no more moral in it, than the former, nor does it make us much amends, either by the number, or variety of its documents. I would, therefore, have passed it by, as some of the editors have done, on the supposition of its not being one of Shakespeare's; but that I thought any thing which had ever been imputed to that author, had a right to claim a place in this Work; unless the rejection of it were established upon better grounds, than the diversity of opinions about its authenticity, among the Commentators.

And, indeed, were I to offer any doubt upon this point, myself, it should not be so much from the objections adduced by the editors, as on account of the unnatural inconsistency of character, in the person of Protheus; who, in the first Act, and during above half the second, appears to stand in the most amiable and virtuous lights, both of morals and manhood, as a fond lover, and a faithful friend; and yet suddenly belies his fair seemings. by an infidelity toward the first object, and a treachery with regard to the second. 'Tis true, indeed, that in the latter end he expresses a sort of contrition for his crimes; but yet this still seems to remain equivocal; as it does not appear to have arisen from any remorse of conscience, or abhorrence of his baseness, but rather from a disappointment in his pursuit, and an open detection of his villainy.

There are but few instances of this kind, that I remember to have met with, throughout the drama of Shakespeare; for however he may sport, as he often does, with the three *unities* of Aristotle, *time*,
place,

place, and *action*, he seldom sins against a fourth, which I am surpris'd the Critics have not added, as being worth them all—namely, that of *character*; the tenor of which is generally preserv'd, from first to last, in all his works. This consistency is required in the epic, and why not insist'd on in the dramatic poem, I cannot conceive.

I am venturing, I own, beyond my purpose; but I am tempted here, upon mentioning his breach of the unities, to observe, that the Commentators do our author great injustice, to examine him by the cold rules of artful construction. Shakespeare's writings resemble the antient music, which consisted in *melody* alone, without regard to *harmony*, which is a science of much later invention; and it has been remarked, that the original airs of every country, which charm a natural ear most, have been those that give offence to *modern composers*, by an utter neglect of the *counter-point*. The compositions of our Bard have the same beauty, with the same defect. He ought, therefore, never to be considered but under the description which Milton has given of him;

“ Our sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,

“ Warbling his native wood-notes wild.”

Would they restrain him within the precincts of art, the height, the depth of whose imagination and creative genius found even the extent of Nature too strictly bounded for it to move in?

“ Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new.”

Like an eastern monarch, his word was law, his will and pleasure edicts and decrees. But there are certain *mechanists* in criticism, who have no other way of judging, but by applying the *rule* and *compass*; like antient gardeners, who trimm'd their forest-trees into cones and cylinders, and reduced winding brooks to square canals. A man must be *born* a critic, as well as a poet; but, at this rate, he may be *bred* both.

But to return from this digression to the subject which lies more properly before us, at present.

A C T

A C T I. S C E N E I.

The great necessity and benefit of Travel are properly recommended, and marked by apt phrase, in the first speech here; which opening, with the addition of a few other passages, seems to promise more than, I am sorry to say, the rest of the piece is responsible for. And it is this circumstance which has induced the critics to suspect this Play not to have been originally one of Shakespeare's, but only revised and enriched with fragments, by him; as it may be deemed to be not *a jewel*, but only *a lump of paste*, set round *with sparks*.

Valentine. Cease to persuade, my loving Protheus;

Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits—

Were't not affection chains thy tender days

To the sweet glances of thy honoured love,

I rather would intreat thy company

To see the wonders of the world abroad,

Than (living *dully sluggardized*, at home)

Wear out thy youth in *shapeless idleness* *.

The tenderness and sollicitudes of friendship are well and fondly expressed in the reply:

Protheus. Wilt thou be gone? Sweet Valentine, adieu;—

Think on thy Protheus, when thou haply seest

Some rare note-worthy object in thy travel—

Wish me partaker in thy happiness,

When thou dost meet good hap; and in thy danger,

If ever danger do environ thee,

Commend thy grievance to my holy prayer;

For I will be thy bead's-man, Valentine.

If ever danger do environ thee—This line strikes me with a peculiar beauty. Protheus desires to be considered as a sharer in his friend's weal or woe, during absence; the first he mentions without any reserve,

Wish me partaker in thy happiness,

When thou dost meet good hap—

But when he comes to speak of the latter, he appears to catch himself up, as if alarmed even at the idea of his danger, and seems to have begun his prayers for him, already.

* Forming neither manners, nor character.

But not to quit the first subject hinted above, only to re-assume it again, I shall introduce a speech from the fourth Scene following, though somewhat out of its place, here; where Panthion, speaking to the father of Protheus, tells him the opinion of another person about him and his son.

Panthion. He wondered that your lordship
Would suffer him to spend his life at home,
While other men of slender reputation
Put forth their sons to seek preferment out;
Some to the wars, to try their fortunes there;
Some to discover islands far away;
Some to the studious Universities.
For any, or for all these exercises,
He said that Protheus, your son, was meet;
And did request me to importune you
To let him spend his time no more at home;
Which would be great impeachment to his age,
In having known no travel in his youth.

Antonio. Nor need'st thou much importune me to that,
Whereon this month I have been hammering.
I have considered well his loss of time,
And how he cannot be a perfect man,
Not being tried and tutored in the world,
Experience is by industry achieved,
And perfected by the *swift* * course of time.

But to return to the first Scene, again. In this and many of the subsequent ones, the several parts of which shall be quoted as they follow in order, to prevent the interruption of the subject, our Author has truly described the nature, the effects, the anxieties, the weaknesses, the extravagancies, and the miseries, of the passion of love, most philosophically, poetically, and experimentally.

Valentine, persuading Protheus to quit his mistress, and accompany him on his travels, says:

To be in love, where scorn is bought with groans;
Coy looks with heart-fore sighs; one fading moment's mirth
With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights—
If haply won, perhaps an hapless gain;
If lost, why then a grievous labour won;
However, but a folly bought with wit;
Or else a wit by folly vanquished.

* Would not *slow* be a fitter word, in this place?

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA. 29

Love is your master, for he masters you ;
And he that is so yoked by a fool,
Methinks should not be chronicled for wise.

Protheus. Yet writers say, as in the sweetest bud
The eating canker dwells, so eating love
Inhabits in the finest wits of all.

Valentine. And writers say, as the most forward bud
Is eaten by the canker, ere it blows ;
Even so by love the young and tender wit
Is turned to folly, blasting in the bud ;
Losing his verdure even in the prime,
And all the fair effects of future hopes.

Protheus, alone.

He after honour hunts, I after love ;
He leaves his friends, to dignify them more ;
I leave myself, my friends, and all, for love.
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me ;
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,
War with good counsel, set the world at nought,
Make wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.

Valentine, after his falling in love, to Protheus :

I have done penance for contemning love ;
Those high imperious thoughts have punished me
With bitter fasts, with penitential groans ;
With nightly tears, and daily heart-fore sighs—
For in revenge of my contempt of love,
Love hath chased sleep from my enthralled eyes,
And made them watchers of my own heart's sorrow.
O, gentle Protheus, love's a mighty lord,
And hath so humbled me, as I confess
There is no woe to his correction ;
Nor to his service, no such joy on earth.
Now no discourse, except it be of love ;
Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep,
Upon the very naked name of love.
Call her divine.

[Scene vii,

Julia and Lucetta.

A true devoted Pilgrim is not weary
To measure kingdoms with his feeble steps ;
Much less shall she, who hath love's wings to fly.
Oh, knowest thou not his looks are my soul's food ?
Pity the dearth that I have pined in,
By longing for that food so long a time.
Didst thou but know the inly touch of love,
Thou would'st as soon go kindle fire with snow,
As seek to quench the fire of love with words.

Lucetta.

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Lucetta. I do not seek to quench your love's hot fire,

But qualify the fire's extreme rage,
Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.

Julia. The more thou damm'st it up, the more it burns—

The current that with gentle murmur glides,
Thou knowest, being stopped, impatiently doth rage ;

But when his fair course is not hindered,
He makes sweet music with the enamelled stones,

Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge

He overtaketh in his pilgrimage—

And so by many winding nooks he strays,

With willing sport to the wide ocean.

[Scene x.

There are two other passages in this Play, which I have not included among the above number of quotations ; because, though they relate to the same subject, yet not falling within the description of the passion, but the artful or sinister conduct of it, only, I have reserved to a place by themselves.

The first is, where Valentine replies to the Duke, who asks his advice how to gain a coy mistress.

Win her with *gifts*, if she respect not *words* ;

Dumb jewels often, in their silent kind,

More than quick words do move a woman's mind.

[Act iii. Scene ii.

The second is in the fifth Scene following the above, where the most effectual, but basest method for curing a woman's love, that can be devised, is there pointed out :

Duke to Protheus.

What might we do to make the girl forget

The love of Valentine, and love Sir Thurio ?

Protheus. The best way is to slander Valentine

With falsehood, cowardice, and poor descent ;

Three things that women highly hold in hate.

Duke. Ay, but she'll think that it is spoke in hate.

Protheus. True, if his enemy deliver it.

Therefore it must with circumstance be spoken,

By one whom she esteemeth as his friend.

A C T V. S C E N E I V.

In the first speech here, Valentine makes a reflection, which cannot be too often marked to us, upon the powerful effect of use or habit over the mind
of

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA. 31

of man. Second nature is more than a match even for the first. In this philosophy lie the manifest and manifold advantages of a good education, which alone forms the different manners allotted to the sexes, rendering men brave, and preserving women chaste. Exchange but the point of honour between them, and you fill the world with amazons and dastards.

*How use doth breed a habit in a man !
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
And to the nightingale's complaining notes
Tune my distresses, and record my woes.*

In the same Scene he expresses himself most affectingly, upon discovering the faithlessness of his friend, and displays a noble and a generous nature, in his ready forgiveness, on the other's as prompt penitence.

*Thou treacherous man !
Thou hast beguiled my hopes ; nought but mine eye
Could have persuaded me.—Now, I dare not say
I have one friend alive—thou would'st disprove me.
Who should be trusted, when one's own right hand
Is perjured to the bosom ? Proteus,
I'm sorry I must never trust thee more,
But count the world a stranger, for thy sake.
The private wound is deepest. Oh time accurst !
'Mongst all foes, that a friend should be the worst.*

Proteus. My shame and guilt confound me—
Forgive me, Valentine ; if hearty sorrow
Be a sufficient ransom for offence,
I tender it here ; I do as truly suffer,
As e'er I did commit.

Valentine. Then I am paid ;
And once again I do receive thee honest.
*Who by repentance is not satisfied,
Is nor of heaven, nor earth.*

S C E N E V. and last.

The Duke. Now, by the honour of my ancestry,
I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,
And think thee worthy of an Empress' love.

Know

Know then, I here forget all former griefs,
 Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again,
 Plead a new state in thy unrivalled merit,
 To which I thus subscribe—Sir Valentine,
Thou art a gentleman, and well derived ;
 Take thou thy Silvia, for thou hast deserved her.

In this passage Valentine is justly commended for his proper and becoming manhood, in vindicating the right both of his love and honour, at the hazard of his, comparatively, meaner life. He has, therefore, a right to the appellation and character here given of him, in the following line :

Thou art a gentleman, and well derived.

But what strikes me more particularly in this speech, is the gallant Duke's asseveration, in that truly noble expression,

Now, by the honour of my ancestry.

It was this generous spirited idea that continued down the race of heroes, among us, *while they did exist* ; and were the profession of heraldry never to be considered in any other light, than as a record of men's worth, *not titles*, it would then become both a political and a liberal science. Honours, as Selden says, should be *native* only, and not *dative* derived from *Merits*, not from *Gifts*.

M E A S U R E

F O R

M E A S U R E.

D

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

DUKE of Vienna.

ANGELO, Lord Deputy in the Duke's absence.

ESCALUS, an ancient Lord joined with him.

CLAUDIO, a young Gentleman.

LUCIO, his Friend.

W O M E N.

ISABELLA, Sister to Claudio.

JULIET, with child by Claudio.

MEASURE for MEASURE.

I CANNOT see what moral can be extracted from the fable of this Piece; but as the author of it seems to have thought otherwise, I shall present the reader with his idea on this subject, in his own words; where the Duke passes sentence on Angelo, his deputy, for his double villainy:

Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;
Like doth quit like, and *measure* still for *measure*.

[Act v. Scene vii.]

But as there is not matter enough here, for further expatiating upon, I shall proceed to collect together the dispersed maxims, sentiments or morals, which may be gathered from the field at large; and which I shall arrange under their several heads, without regard to the order of the drama; as this method may best serve to give them an *united force*, and enable them to act more strongly on the minds of my readers.

A C T I. S C E N E II.

That our talents, our faculties, or powers, are not our own, properly; but that we are to consider ourselves as endowed with such advantages, by Providence, for the more enlarged benefit of mankind, is finely set forth in the following speech:

Duke. Angelo,

There is a kind of character in thy *life* *,
That to the observer doth thy history
Fully unfold. *Thyself, and thy belongings*
Are not thine own so proper, as to waste
Thyself upon thy virtues; them on thee.
Heaven doth with us, as we with torches do;
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike,

* Doctor Johnson reads *look*; and, I think, rightly.

*As if we had them not *. Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues ; nor Nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty Goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks, and use.*

The dangers to be apprehended to society, from those who affect too much popularity, are very justly remarked upon, in the same Scene ; which judgment may be fully supported by innumerable instances of Demagogues to be met with in history, both ancient and modern.

Duke. I love the people,
But do not like to stage me to their eyes ;
Tho' it do well, I do not relish well
Their loud applause, and *Ave's* vehement ;
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion,
That does affect it.

SCENE VI.

That a spirit of liberty, where the reins of government are suffered to relax, is too apt to exceed into a licentiousness which counteracts its own ends, is well noted here.

Lucio, on seeing his friend carrying to prison.

Why, how now, Claudio ? Whence comes this restraint ?

Claudio. From too much liberty, my Lucio, liberty ;
As surfeit is the father of much fast,
So every scope by the immoderate use
Turns to restraint : our natures do pursue,
Like rats that raven down their proper bane,
A thirsty evil ; and when we drink we die.

Again, in the next Scene :

Duke. We have strict statutes, and most biting laws ;
The needful bits and curbs for head-strong steeds ;
Which for these nineteen years we have let sleep ;
Even like an o'er-grown lion in a cave,
That goes not out to prey. Now, as fond fathers,
Having bound up the threatening twigs of birch,
Only to stick it in their childrens sight,
For terror, not to use ; in time the rod
Becomes more mocked, than feared ; so our decrees,

* *Paulum sepultæ distat inertiae
Celata virtus.*

Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead ;
And liberty plucks justice by the nose ;
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
Goes all decorum.

And just after, condemning his own neglect, in suffering the people to take such scope, he carries his censure against himself so far, as even to say that he had encouraged them to do so :

For we bid this be done,
When evil deeds have their permissive pass,
And not the punishment.

The same reflection is carried on, in the fifth Scene of the Second Act ; where some one says,

Lord Angelo is severe.

To which Escalus, his colleague in administration, replies,

It is but needful ;
Mercy is not itself, that oft looks so ;
Pardon is still the nurse of second woe.

But to recur back again to the first Act, which I quitted in pursuit of the above argument started there ; in the sixth Scene, where Claudio desires his friend to employ his sister to solicit his pardon, he very judiciously urges that peculiar kind of persuasiveness, which naturally dwells in youth and innocence :

Acquaint her with the danger of my State ;
Implore her, in my voice, that she make friends
To the strict Deputy ; bid herself assay him ;
I have great hope in That ; for in her youth
'There is a *prone** and speechless dialect,
Such as moves men !

And again, in the last Scene of this first Act, Lucio says to Isabella,

Go to lord Angelo,
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue,
Men give like gods ; but when they weep and kneel,
All their petitions are as truly theirs,
As they themselves would owe them.

* Doctor Johnson reads *power*, or *prompt*, either of which epithets would certainly render this passage more intelligible. I prefer the latter expression.

In the same Scene the nature and danger of irresolution is well described.

Lucio. Our doubts are traitors ;
And make us lose the good we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt.

A C T I I . S C E N E I .

The political arguments for justice, with the humane motives for mercy, are finely contrasted here, between the two Deputies of the State :

Angelo. We must not make a scare-crow of the law,
Setting it up to fear the birds of prey,
And let it keep one shape, 'till custom makes it
Their perch, and not their terror.

Escalus. Ay, but yet
Let us be keen, and rather cut a little,
Than fall and bruise to death.
Let but your Honour know,
Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,
'That, in the working of your own affections,
Had time cohered with place, or place with wishing,
Or that the resolute acting of your blood
Could have attained the effect of your own purpose ;
Whether you had not, sometime in your life,
Erred in this point, which now you censure him,
And pulled the law upon you.

Angelo. 'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
Another thing to fall. I not deny,
'The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,
May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two,
Guiltier than him they try. What's open made to justice,
'That justice seizes on. What know the laws,
That thieves do pass on thieves ? 'Tis very pregnant,
'The jewel that we find, we stoop and take it,
Because we see it ; but what we do not see,
We tread upon, and never think of it.
You may not so extenuate his offence,
For I have had such faults ; but rather tell me,
When I that censure him, do so offend,
Let mine own judgment pattern out my death,
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

Escalus. Well, heaven forgive him ! and forgive us all !
Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall ;
Some run thro' brakes of ice, and answer none ;
And some condemned for a fault alone.

S C E N E VII.

We find the same subjects continued here, with additional spirit and beauty.

Isabella to Angelo.

I have a brother is condemned to die—
I do beseech you, let it be his fault,
And not my brother.

Angelo. Condemn the fault, and not the actor of it?
Why, every fault's condemned, ere it be done;
Mine were the very cypher of a function,
'To find the faults whose fine stands in the record,
And let go by the actor.

Isabella. O just, but severe law! Must he needs die?

Angelo. Maiden, no remedy.

Isabella. Yes; I do think that you might pardon him;
And neither heaven, nor man, grieve at the mercy.

Angelo. I will not do it.

Isabella. But can you, if you would?

Angelo. Look, what I *will not* *, that I cannot do.

Isabella. But might you do it, and do the world no wrong,
If so your heart were touched with that remorse,
As mine is to him?

Angelo. He's sentenced; 'tis too late.

Isabella. Too late? Why, no; I that do speak a word,
May call it back again. Well, believe this,
No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,
Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,
The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,
Become them with one half so good a grace,
As mercy does. If he had been as you,
And you as he, you would have slipt like him;
But he like you would not have been so stern.

Angelo. Pray you, be gone.

Isabella. I would to heaven I had your potency,
And you were Isabel; should it then be thus?
No—I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,
And what a prisoner.

Angelo. Your brother is a forfeit of the law,
And you but waste your words.

Isabella. Alas! alas!

Why, all the souls that *were* †, were forfeit, once;

* *Ought not*, I should think to be a more proper expression, here.

† Doctor Warburton has changed *were*, to *are*, because, he says, the expression, in the text, is *false divinity*. I tremble at venturing to differ from so learned a judge in matters of theology; but are we not taught that the *redemption* had re-

*And he that might the 'vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If he, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? Oh, think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new made.*

Angelo. Be you content, fair maid;
It is the law, not I, condemns your brother.
Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,
It should be thus with him. He dies to-morrow.

Isabella. To-morrow! Oh, that's sudden! Spare him, spare him;
He's not prepared for death. Even for our kitchens
We kill the fowl of season; shall we serve heaven
With less respect than we do minister
To our gross selves? Good, good my lord, bethink you:
Who is it that hath died for this offence?
There's many have committed it.

Angelo. The law hath not been dead, tho' it hath slept—
Those many had not dared to do that evil,
If the first man that did th' edict infringe,
Had answered for his deed. Now, 'tis awake;
Takes note of what is done; and, like a prophet,
Looks in a glass that shews what future evils,
Or new, or by remissness new conceived,
And so in progress to be hatched and born,
Are now to have no successive degrees;
But ere they live, to end.

Isabella. Yet shew some pity.

Angelo. *I shew it most of all, when I shew justice;*
For then I pity those I do not know;
Which a dismissed offence would after gall;
And do him right, that, answering one foul wrong,
Lives not to act an other. Be satisfied;
Your brother dies—to-morrow.

Isabella. Oh, 'tis excellent
To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.
Could great men thunder,
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet;
For every pelting petty officer
Would use his heaven for thunder;
Nothing but thunder—Merciful heaven!
Thou rather with thy sharp and sulph'rous bolt
Splittest the unwedgeable and gnarled oak,
Than the soft myrtle—O, but man, proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,

least the *forfeit*? We were then brought within the pale, at least, of salvation, which the orthodoxy says we were not before; and a second *forfeit*, I should therefore suppose to be the consequence of our own transgression, not that of our first parents.

His

His glassy effence, like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep ; who, with our spleens,
Would all themselves laugh mortal. . . .
We cannot weigh our brother with yourself ;
Great men may jest with saints ; 'tis wit in them ;
But in the less, foul profanation. . . .
That in the captain's but a cholerick word,
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.

Angelo. Why do you put these sayings upon me ?

Isabella. Because authority, tho' it err like others,
Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself,
That skins the vice o' th' top. Go to your bosom ;
Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth know,
That's like my brother's fault ; if it confess
A natural guiltiness, such as his is,
Let it not found a thought upon your tongue,
Against my brother's life.

Angelo. (*Aside.*) She speaks, and 'tis such sense,
That my sense breeds with it (*To Isabella.*) Fare you well.

Isabella. Gentle, my lord, turn back.

Angelo. I will bethink me—Come again, to-morrow.

Isabella. Hark, how I'll bribe you—good my lord, turn back—

Angelo. How ? Bribe me !

Isabella. Ay, with such gifts, that heaven shall share with you.
Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,
Or stones whose rates are either rich, or poor,
As fancy values them ; but with true prayers,
That shall be up at heaven, and enter there,
Ere sun-rise ; prayers from preserved souls,
From fasting maids whose minds are delicate
'To nothing temporal.

I have transcribed, perhaps, more of this dialogue, than may be thought strictly relative to the arguments of it ; but I found it impossible to break off before, and I believe the reader would be sorry to have had me interrupt it sooner.

S C E N E VIII.

The powerful attractions of virtue and modesty, are finely shewn, in Angelo's conflict and reflections, here. Isabella, having, in the last Scene, received some hope of pardon for her brother, takes leave of the Deputy, with this expression :

Save your honour !

Angelo solus.

From thee, even from thy virtue—

What's

What's this ? what's this ? Is this her fault, or mine ?
 The tempter, or the tempted, who sins most ?
 Not she—nor doth she tempt—but it is I,
 That, lying by the violet in the fun,
 Do, as the carrion does, not as the flower,
 Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be,
 That modesty may more betray our sense,
 Than woman's lightness ? having waste ground enough,
 Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary,
 And pitch our evils there ? Oh, fie, fie, fie !
 What dost thou ? or what art thou, Angelo ?
 Dost thou desire her foully, for those things
 That make her good ? Oh, let her brother live—
 Thieves for their robbery have authority,
 When judges steal themselves. What ? do I love her,
 That I desire to hear her speak again,
 And feast upon her eyes ? What is't I dream on ?
 Oh, cunning enemy, that to catch a saint,
 With saints dost bait thy hook ? most dangerous
 Is that temptation, that doth goad us on
 To sin in loving virtue. Ne'er could the Strumpet,
 With all her double vigour, art, and nature,
 Once stir my temper ; but this virtuous Maid
 Subdues me quite. Ever 'till this very now,
 When men were fond, I smiled, and wondered how.

S C E N E IX.

The Duke here, under the character of a friar, in confessing Juliet, gives an admirable lesson on the nature of *contrition*, distinguishing it very properly from *attrition* merely; and, at the same time, expresses a just but severe sentence against a woman's failure in the point of chastity; their education, their manners, and the moral consequences of their frailty, throwing so many more bars in their way, than the modes of the world have opposed to the other sex.

Duke to Juliet.

Repent you, fair one, of the sin you carry ?

Juliet. I do ; and bear the shame most patiently.

Duke. I'll teach you how you shall arraign your conscience,
 And try your penitence if it be sound,
 Or hollowly put on.

Juliet. I'll gladly learn.

Duke. Love you the man that wronged you ?

Juliet. Yes, as I love the woman that wronged him.

Duke.

Duke. So then, it seems, your most offenceful act
Was mutually committed.

Juliet. Mutually.

Duke. Then was your sin of heavier kind than his.

Juliet. I do confess it, and repent it, father.

Duke. 'Tis meet so, daughter—But repent you not,
As that the sin hath brought you to this shame ?
Which sorrow's always towards ourselves, not heaven ;
*Shewing, we'd not seek Heaven, as we love it,
But as we stand in fear.*

Juliet. I do repent me, as it is an evil.

Duke. There rest.

SCENE X.

The frailty of human nature is well described in the wanderings of the mind in prayer, and the struggle between virtue and passion, in the first speech here ; which concludes with observing, how apt the pageantry or false seemings of power are to impose on the world, even *the great vulgar*, as well as the *small*.

Angelo solus.

When I would pray and think, I think and pray
To several subjects : Heaven hath my empty words,
Whilst my intention, hearing not my tongue,
Anchors on Isabel. Heaven's in my mouth,
As if I did but only chew its name ;
And in my heart the strong and swelling evil
Of my conception. The state, whereon I studied,
Is like a good thing, being often read,
Grown feared and tedious ; yea, my gravity,
Wherein (let no man hear me) I take pride,
Could I with boot change for an idle plume,
Which the air beats for vain. Oh place ! oh form !
How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,
Wrench awe from fools, and tie the wiser souls
To thy false seeming ? Blood, thou art but blood.
Let's write *good angel* on the Devil's horn ;
*'Tis yet * the Devil's crest.*

SCENE XI.

There is a proper sentiment of Christian humility, expressed by Isabella, in this place :

Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good,
But graciously to know I am no better.

* Doctor Johnson's reading, instead of *'tis not*.

And

And just after, there is a virtuous argument finely supported by her, against the insidious pleadings of the Deputy; who, after refusing her a pardon for her brother, thus proceeds:

Angelo. Admit no other way to save his life,
(As I subscribe not that, nor any other,
But in the *loss* † of question) that you, his sister,
Finding yourself desired of such a person,
Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,
Could fetch your brother from the manacles
Of the all-binding law; and that there were
No earthly mean to save him, but that either
You must lay down the treasures of your body
To this supposed, or else let him suffer;
What would you do?

Isabella. As much for my poor brother, as myself—
That is, were I under the terms of death,
The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies,
And strip myself to death, as to a bed
That longing I've been sick for, ere I'd yield
My body up to shame.

Angelo. Then must your brother die.

Isabella. And 'twere the cheaper way;
Better it were a brother died for once,
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,
Should die for ever.

Angelo. Were not you, then, as cruel as the sentence,
That you have slandered so?

Isabella. Ignominy in ransom, and free pardon,
Are of two houses; lawful mercy, sure,
Is nothing kin to foul redemption.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Duke, remaining still under the disguise of a friar, comes to the prison to prepare Claudio for death; upon which subject he makes a number of moral and philosophic reflections; but these last mostly of the Stoic kind, by observing on the precariousness and insignificance of human life; the whole of which I shall give here at full length.

Duke *to* Claudio.

Be absolute for death; or death, or life,
Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life;

† Doctor Johnson more properly reads *loss*, for *canvass*, of the question.

If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing,
 That none but fools would keep ; a breath thou art,
 Servile to all the skiey influences,
 That do this habitation where thou keep'st,
 Hourly afflict ; merely thou art death's fool ;
 For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun,
 And yet runn'st toward him still. Thou art not noble ;
 For all the accommodations that thou bearest,
 Are nursed by baseness ; thou'rt by no means valiant ;
 For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
 Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,
 And that thou oft provok'st ; yet grossly fear'st
 Thy death, which is no more. Thou'rt not thyself ;
 For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains,
 That issue out of dust. Happy thou art not ;
 For what thou hast not, That thou striv'st to get ;
 And what thou hast, forget'st. Thou art not certain ;
 For thy complexion shifts to strange *effects* *,
 After the moon. If thou'rt rich, thou'rt poor ;
 For, like an ass, whose back with ingots bows,
 Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,
 And death unloadeth thee. Friend hast thou none ;
 For thy own bowels which do call thee Sire,
 The mere effusion of thy proper loins,
 Do curse the gout, serpigo, and the rheum,
 For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth, nor age ;
 But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,
 Dreaming on both ; for all thy *blasted* † youth
 Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms
 Of palsied eld ; and when thou'rt old and rich,
 Thou hast nor heat, affection, limb, or beauty,
 To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this,
 That bears the name of life ? Yet in this life,
 Lye hid more than a thousand deaths ; yet death we fear,
 That makes these odds all even.

And in the next scene, Isabella, after hinting to her brother at certain base conditions, on which his sentence might be remitted, endeavours to strengthen his resolution to prefer death before dishonour, by somewhat of the same manner of reasoning, as above ; but more conclusive and concise :

Oh, I do fear thee, Claudio ; and I quake,
 Lest thou a feverish life should'st entertain,
 And fix or seven winters more respect,
 Than a perpetual honour. Darest thou die ?

* Dr. Johnson reads *affects*, and with good reason.

† The Doctor also reads *blasted*, instead of *blest*.

The sense of death is most in apprehension ;
 And the poor beetle that we tread upon,
 In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great,
 As when a giant dies.

To this suspicion of his weakness he replies,
 with the spirit becoming a man of honour and virtue :

Claudio. Why give you me this shame ?
 Think you, I can a resolution fetch
 From flowery tenderness ? If I must die,
 I will encounter darkness as a bride,
 And hug it in my arms.

But after having paid this compliment to heroism,
 Human Nature comes in for its share, in turn ; and
 he then pleads for life, even on the most abject
 terms :

Claudio. Oh, Isabel !

Isabella. What says my brother ?

Claudio. Death's a fearful thing.

Isabella. And shamed life a hateful.

Claudio. Ay, but to die, and go we know not where ;
 To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot ;
 This sensible warm motion to become
 A kneaded clod ; and the *delinquent* * spirit
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
 In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice ;
 To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
 And blown with restless violence round about
 The pendant world ; or to be worse than worst
 Of those that lawless and uncertain thoughts
 Imagine howling ; 'tis too horrible !
 The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
 That age, ach, penury, and imprisonment,
 Can lay on Nature, is a paradise,
 To what we fear of death.

What an ignoble sentiment is here expressed, in
 the four last lines of this speech ! and yet the great
 Mæcenæ had the same, and declared it very nearly
 in the same words ! What a disgrace to letters ! But
 history describes him to have been a person of fop-
 pish and effeminate manners ; and 'tis but rarely that
 the outward character belies the inward one.

* Instead of *delighted*. Johnson.

Isabella's indignation against her brother on this occasion, though it has no relation to the subjects we are upon, yet as it may have an effect in raising the same resentment against vice and meanness, in the minds of my readers, I think it worthy to be inserted here :

Isabella. Oh, you beast !

Oh, faithless coward ! Oh, dishonest wretch !

Wilt thou be made a man, out of my vice ?

Is't not a kind of incest, to take life

From thine own sister's shame ? What should I think :

Heaven grant my mother played my father fair !

For such a warped slip of wilderness

Ne'er issued from his blood—Take my defiance—

Die, perish ! might my only bending down,

Reprieve thee from thy fate, it should proceed.

Oh, fie, fie, fie !

Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade ;

Mercy to thee would prove itself a bawd ;

'Twere best that thou diest quickly.

S C E N E VI.

In the last speech of this scene, our Author gives us a shocking, but too just description of Slander :

Duke. No might nor greatness, in Mortality,

Can censure 'scape—back-wounding Calumny

The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong,

Can tie the gall up in the slandering tongue ?

A C T IV. S C E N E III.

In the last passage of this Scene, the Duke repeats the same reflection, in still stronger terms :

O place and greatness ! Millions of false eyes

Are stuck upon thee. Volumes of report

Run with these false and most contrarious quests

Upon thy doings—thousand 'scapes of wit

Make thee the father of their idle dreams,

And rack thee in their fancies !

Such has been the complaint of all ages, even when the scandal was merely *oral* ; but how much more intolerable has the offence become, of late years, when obloquy is not only privately spoken, but publicly printed, and openly circulated throughout these kingdoms ? The *Freedom* of the Press should be ever held

held sacred among us. 'Tis our *Palladium*. But surely, to restrain its *Licentiousness*, can no more hurt the *Liberty* of it, than the chastisement of felony can be said to injure the liberty of the subject.

S C E N E X.

When Isabella, upon a supposition of her brother's death, curses Angelo for his perfidy, the Duke reproves her in the following words:

This nor hurts him, nor profits you, a jot ;
 Forbear it, therefore ; *give your cause to Heaven.*

*

*

*

Shakespeare seems to have wound up the several morals of his characters and dialogue, in this place, with an excellent Christian document, against the rage of malediction, and the passion of revenge ; for we find little more in the remainder of it, sufficiently worthy of continuing any further remarks on the Piece.

P O S T S C R I P T.

In Number 491 of the SPECTATOR, there is a parallel story with this of Angelo related, though not in every circumstance the same, of Rhynsfault, Governor of Zealand, under Charles the Bald, Duke of Burgundy ; which may amuse the reader to recur to, after reading this Play.

THE
MERCHANT
OF
VENICE.

E

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

MOROCHIUS, a Moorish Prince.

PRINCE of Arragon.

ANTHONIO, the Merchant of Venice.

BASSANIO, his Friend.

SALANIO,

SOLARINO,

GRATIANO,

} Friends to Anthonio and Bassanio.

LORENZO, in love with Jessica.

SHYLOCK, a Jew.

LAUNCELOT, Servant to the Jew.

W O M E N.

PORTIA, an Heiress.

NERISSA, her Maid.

JESSICA, the Jew's Daughter.

T H E

MERCHANT of VENICE.

I Shall take no further notice of the want of a moral fable, in the rest of these Plays; but shall proceed to observe upon the characters and dialogue, without interruption, for the future.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

The forebodings or presentiments of evil, natural to the human mind, are strongly pointed at here. It were in vain to attempt the investigation of this matter from philosophy, any more than that of prophetic dreams; so that all we have to do, is simply to acquiesce in the fact itself, which repeated experience has sufficiently vouched in too many remarkable instances, to be imputed to common casualty.

Antonio, Solarino, and Salanio.

Antonio. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad;
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn.—

Upon which his two friends attempt to account for this impression on his mind, in a very natural manner—as, “Where a man’s treasure is, there will
“his heart be also.”

Solanio. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There where your *Argosies* with portly fail,
Like Signiors and rich Burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do over-peer the petty traffickers,
That curtsie to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Solarino. Believe me, Sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still

Plucking

Plucking the grafs *, to know where fits the wind ;
 Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads ;
 And every object that might make me fear
 Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,
 Would make me sad.

Sa'anio. My wind, cooling my broth,
 Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
 What harm a wind too great might do at sea.
 I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
 But I should think of shallows and of flats,
 And see my wealthy *Andrew* docked in sand,
 Vailing her high top lower than her ribs,
 To kiss her burial. Should I go to church,
 And see the holy edifice of stone,
 And not bethink me trait of dangerous rocks ?
 Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
 Would scatter all the spices on the stream,
 Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks ;
 And, in a word, but even now worth this,
 And now worth nothing. Shall I have the thought
 To think on this, and shall I lack the thought,
 That such a thing bechanced would make me sad ?
 But tell not me—I know *Anthonio*
 Is sad to think upon his merchandize.

But when he denies that any reflection upon the state of his fortune, or that even the passion of love, has wrought this grave effect upon his spirits, they then remain quite at a loss to account farther for it, referring it merely to the peculiarity of his character, or particular complexion of mind ; which is described and contrasted with one of an opposite cast, with admirable humour :

Salario. Not in love, neither ! Then let's say, you're sad,
 Because you are not merry ; and 'twere as easy
 For you to laugh and leap, and say you're merry,
 Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed *Janus*,
 Nature hath framed strange fellows, in her time ;
 Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
 And laugh, like parrots, at a bag piper ;
 And others of such vinegar aspect,
 That they'll not shew their teeth, in way of smile,
 Though *Nestor* swear the jest be laughable.

Gratiano then coming in, and taking notice of the seriousness of *Anthonio's* aspect, alike imputes it to the same cause his other friends had done :

* To throw up into the air.

You look not well, Signior Anthonio;
You have too much respect upon the world;
They lose it that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

To which he replies :

I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano,
A stage where every man must play his part;
And mine a sad one.

Upon this, Gratiano enters into the same humorous description of the different characters of men, as Solarino had done.

Let me play the fool;
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Anthonio,
(I love thee, and it is my love that speaks)
There are a sort of men, whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pool,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be drest in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,
"And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!"
O, my Anthonio, I do know of those,
That therefore only are reputed wise,
For saying nothing; who, I'm very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears,
Which hearing them would call their *brothers' fools* *.
But fish not with this melancholy bait
For this fool's gudgeon, this opinion.

Another very common character in life is also described in the same scene; though I think not fairly applicable to the person who was capable of making the speech above cited :

Bassanio. "Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more
"than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of
"wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you may seek all day ere you
"find them; and when you have them, they are not worth the
"search."

* Alluding to the Scripture text, *He that calleth his brother a fool, &c.*

In the following passage of the same Scene, there is a warmth of affection and generous friendship, fondly and beautifully expressed.

Bassanio and Anthonio.

Bassanio. To you, Anthonio,
I owe the most in money, and in love ;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes,
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Anthonio. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it ;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means
Lye all unlocked to your occasions. . . .
You know me well ; and herein spend but time,
To wind about my love with circumstance ;
And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong,
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have.
Then do but say to me what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it—Therefore, speak. . . .
Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea,
Nor have I money, nor commodity,
To raise a present sum ; therefore, go forth ;
Try what my credit can in Venice do ;
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to *Belmont*, to fair *Portia*.
Go presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is ; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake.

Again, in the third Scene of Act the Third, the same noble spirit is carried on.

Portia and Bassanio.

Portia. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble ?

Bassanio. The dearest friend to me ; the kindest man ;
The best conditioned—an unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies ; and one in whom
The antient Roman honour more appears,
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Portia. What sum owes he the Jew ?

Bassanio. For me, three thousand ducats.

Portia. What ! no more ?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond ;

Double

Double fix thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair thro' my Bassanio's fault.

And from the Fifth Scene of the same Act, another passage may be quoted, which breathes the same strain.

Portia *and* Lorenzo.

Lorenzo. Madam, altho' I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of godlike amity ; which appears most strongly,
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew on whom you shew this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief to,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband ;
I know, you would be prouder of this work,
Than customary bounty could inforce you.

Portia. I never did repent of doing good,
And shall not now ; for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There needs must be a like proportion
Of lineaments of manners, and of spirit ;
Which makes me think that this Anthonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestowed,
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish cruelty !
*This comes too near the praising of myself ;
Therefore, no more of it.*

There is a becoming reserve and modesty in this last sentence, which gives an additional beauty to the character of Portia. But I must now return again to the First Act, that I may recover the order of the reflections which are made in this Piece.

SCENE II.

Here the golden mean is well recommended, by shewing the excess on either side, to be equally bad :

Portia *and* Nerissa.

Portia. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is weary of this great world.

56 THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Nerissa. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are. And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing; therefore, it is no mean happiness to be seated in the *mean*; superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.”

From thence Portia takes occasion to hint at the inefficacy of good counsel towards governing or restraining our passions :

Portia. Good sentences, and well pronounced.

Nerissa. They would be better, if well followed.

Portia. If to do, were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. He is a good divine that follows his own instructions; I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than to be one of the twenty to follow my own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree; such a hare is madness, the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel, the cripple.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

The next passage that occurs, is a reflection on the casualties of fortune, which no merit, no industry, no prudence can controul.

Morochius to Portia.

Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets,
To try my fortune. By this scimitar,
That slew the Sophy, and a Persian prince,
That won three fields from Sultan Solyman,
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring to the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas * play at dice,
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand—
So is Alcides beaten by his page.
And so may I, blind Fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

* Page to Hercules.

S C E N E II.

In this Scene, the soliloquy of Launcelot is a strong picture of the mind of man, whenever it debates within itself upon the right or wrong of a question, in which it is any way interested; for in such cases, our passions, even without our connivance, are apt to plead their own cause; and we but sophisticate, while we think we reason. In all doubtful matters, where the arguments seem to be equally suspended, 'tis prudent ever to suspect that side of the balance to be the lightest, which we find our affections the most inclined to.

Launcelot. Certainly, my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew, my master. The fiend is at my elbow, and tempts me; saying to me, Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot, or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away. My conscience says, no; take heed, honest Launcelot, take heed, honest Gobbo; or, as aforesaid, honest Launcelot Gobbo, do not run; scorn running with the heels. Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack; *via!* says the fiend; away! says the fiend; for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind, says the fiend; and run. Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, my honest friend, Launcelot, being an honest man's son, or rather, an honest woman's son (for, indeed, my father did something smack; something grow to; he had a kind of taste)—Well, my conscience says, budge not; budge, says the fiend; budge not, says my conscience. Conscience, says I, you counsel ill; fiend, says I, you counsel ill. To be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew, my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend; who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnate; and in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel; I will run; fiend, my heels are at your command; I will run.

S C E N E IX.

The description here given of the parting of two friends, would make a beautiful and affecting subject for the pencil:

Salanio. And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And, with affection wond'rous sensible,
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

S C E N E X.

The false or mistaken supputations of happiness, which men are too often apt to frame to themselves, are well remarked upon, in this place :

Prince of Arragon, *on viewing the Caskets, with their mottoes.*

Fortune, now,
To my heart's hope ! Gold, silver, and base lead.
*Who chuseth me, must give and hazard all he hath **.
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest ? Ha, let me see—
Who chuseth me, shall gain what many men desire.
What many men desire—That may be meant
Of the fool multitude, that chuse by shew ;
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach,
Which pries not to the interior ; but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not chuse what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits,
And rank me with the barb'rous multitude.

And immediately after, in the same speech, he makes a just and noble reflection, distinguishing merit from dignities ; or titles *to*, from titles *of*, honour.

Well then to thee, thou silver treasure-house,
Tell me, once more, what title thou dost bear—
Who chuseth me, shall get as much as he deserves.
And well said too ; for who shall go about
To cozen Fortune and be honourable,
Without the stamp of merit ? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity—
O that estates, degrees, and offices,
Were not derived corruptly ! that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer !
How many then should cover, that stand bare ?
How many be commanded, that command ?
How much low peasantry would then be *pickt* †
From the true seed of honour ? How much honour
Gleaned ‡ from the chaff and ruin of the times,
To be new *vanned* ||

* Leaden casket.

† *Pickt*, instead of *gleaned*.

‡ *Gleaned*, instead of *pickt*. Johnson.

|| *Vanned*, or *winnowed*, instead of *varnished*. Warburton.

These three alterations certainly preserve the purity of the metaphor from the manifest corruption of the text.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The great principle of universal charity, which soars above the partial respects of nations or of sects, is strongly, though indirectly, inculcated, in the Jew's speech, here; which, according to this very principle, should be received without prejudice, though proceeding from the mouth of an Alien, and an Infidel.

Shylock, speaking of Anthonio,

“ He hath disgraced me, and hindered me of half a million,
 “ laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation,
 “ thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies;
 “ and what's his reason? *I am a Jew*. Hath not a Jew eyes?
 “ Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections,
 “ passions? Fed with the same food, hurt by the same weapons,
 “ subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed
 “ and cooled by the same summer and winter, as a Christian is?
 “ If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not
 “ laugh? If you poison us, do we not die?”

As the remainder of the speech exceeds the moderation of Christian ethics, I think proper to stop the Jew's mouth, here.

The same person says something again to the like purport, in the first Scene of Act the Fourth, that ought to awaken our minds to proper sentiments of humanity, upon this subject.

Shylock. You have among you many a *purchased slave*;
 Which, like your asses, and your dogs, and mules,
 You use in abject and in slavish part,
Because you bought them—Shall I say to you,
 Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
 Why sweat they under burdens? Let their beds
 Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
 Be seasoned with such viands—You will answer,
The slaves are ours.

Montesquieu, in his *Spirit of Laws*, speaking with a just contempt and humorous severity against all the arguments brought in defence of this cruelty,
 says,

says, that the strongest reason which can be given for the practice of using Negroes like beasts of burden, is, *their having black skins, and flat noses.*

In the second scene of the Third Act, the difficulty of determining the true rate of persons or things, is largely commented upon; and as opinion is too often more under the dominion of fancy than of reason, perhaps the stanzas which precede the reflections, may serve as a proper prelude to the speech. The reader, at least, I dare say, will be pleased at finding them inserted here.

A Song while Bassanio debates with himself, on his choice of the caskets.

*Tell me, whereis fancy bred,
In the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?* }

R E P L Y.

*It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies }*
*In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it—Ding, dong, bell—*

C H O R U S.

Ding, dong, bell.

After which Bassanio speaks :

*So may the outward shows be least themselves *;
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
Obscures the shew of evil? In religion,
What damned error but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text;
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on its outward part.
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As flairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins*

* As the beginning of this speech is abrupt, we are to suppose the former part of the argument to have passed silently in his mind, before he speaks aloud. This is Doctor Johnson's remark.

The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;
 Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk?
 And these assume but valour's excrement,
 To render them redoubt'd—Look on beauty,
 And you shall see 'tis purchas'd by the weight,
 Which therein works a miracle in nature,
 Making them lightest, that wear most of it.
 So are those crispy snaky golden locks,
 Which make such wanton gambols with the wind
 Upon supposed fairness, often known
 To be the dowry of a second head,
 The skull that bred them, in the sepulchre.
 Thus ornament is but the gilded shore
 To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
 Veiling an Indian *dowdy**; in a word,
 The seeming truth which cunning times put on,
 To entrap the wisest. Then, thou gaudy gold,
 Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee:
 Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
 'Twixt man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
 Which rather threatenest, than dost promise aught,
 Thy *plainness*† moves me more than eloquence;
 And here chuse I—Joy be the consequence!

Portia's rapture, on finding her favourite lover has chosen right, is warmly and finely expressed, in the next speech; in which the danger of an excess of joy is also pointed out:

How all the other passions fleet to air—
 As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
 And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy.
 O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy;
 In measure *rein*‡ thy joy, scant this excess;
 I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,
 For fear I surfeit.

In the fifth Scene following, there is a ridiculous, but whimsical, description of a vain boasting young man; many of which sort are to be met with in life; in courts, in camps, in coffee-houses:

Portia and Nerissa, going into boy's cloaths.

Portia. I'll hold thee any wager,
 When we are both apparelled like young men,
 I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,

* *Dowdy*—The word in the text is *beauty*, but reformed by Sir Thomas Planmer.

† Instead of *paleness*. Johnson.

‡ *Rein*, instead of *rain*. Ditto.

And wear my dagger with the braver grace;
 And speak between the change of man and boy,
 With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps
 Into a manly stride; and *speak of frays,*
Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,
How honourable laaies sought my love,
 Which I denying, they fell sick and died.
 Then I'll repent,
 And wish, for all that, that I had not killed them.
 And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
 That men shall swear I've discontinued school
 Above a twelve-month—I have in my mind
 A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
 Which I will practise.

A C T IV. S C E N E II.

The character of Mercy is here most beautifully described. This passage can never be too often read. There is no danger of its growing *feared and tedious* *, as Angelo says of the laws of justice.

Portia, *pleading for Anthonio.*

The quality of Mercy is not strained;
 It droppeth as the gentle rain of heaven
 Upon the place beneath: It is twice blessed;
 It blesteth him that gives, and him that takes.
 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
 The throned monarch better than his crown;
 His sceptre shews the force of temporal power,
 The attribute to awe and majesty,
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
 It is an attribute to God himself;
 And earthly power doth then shew likest God's,
 When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
 Tho' justice be thy plea, consider this,
 That in the course of justice none of us
 Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy;
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
 The deeds of mercy.

There is also a passage in the same Scene, where the Pro and Con for partial justice is rightly ar-

* Measure for Measure, Act II, Scene X.

gued on both sides ; but terminates, as I fear it should do, for the safety of a State, in stoical strictness.

Bassanio to Portia, in the character of a Judge.

And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority ;
To do a great right, do a little wrong ;
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Portia. It must not be ; there is no power in Venice,
Should alter a decree established.

'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the State—It cannot be.

We have also, here, some philosophic reflections on the advantages of dying before we are encumbered with age and poverty, with a manly spirit of acquiescence in the unavoidable ills of life, joined to the affecting tenderness and generous regards of friendship.

Anthonio, when the Jew has obtained sentence against him :

I am armed, and well prepared—
Give me your hand, Bassanio ; fare ye well !
Grieve not, that I am fallen to this for you ;
For herein Fortune shews herself more kind,
Than is her custom. It is still her use,
To let the wretched man out-live his wealth,
To view with hollow eye, and wrinkled brow,
An age of poverty ; from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off—
Commend me to your honourable wife ;
Tell her the process of Anthonio's end ;
Say how I loved you ; speak me fair, in death ;
And when the tale is told, bid her be judge,
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent not you, that you shall lose your friend ;
And he repents not, that he pays your debt ;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly *with all my heart.*

'Tis a pity this fine speech should be disgraced by the quibble in the last expression.

A C T

ACT V. SCENE I.

The enchanting powers and effects of music are here most poetically set forth. There can never be said too much on this charming theme. Men's minds may be sometimes too stern or obstinate to yield to argument, but in melody there is *a sort of sentiment*, that sinks into the heart, and by awaking the softer passions of the soul, often persuades, where reason else would fail.

Lorenzo and Jessica.

A Sound of Music.

Jessica. I'm never merry, when I hear sweet music.

Lorenzo. The reason is, your spirits grow attentive ;
 For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
 Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
 Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
 (Which is the mad condition of their blood)
 If they perchance but hear a trumpet sound,
 Or any air of music touch their ears,
 You shall perceive them make a mutual stand ;
 Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze,
 By the sweet power of music. Therefore, the Poet
 Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods ;
 Since none so stickish, hard and full of rage,
 But music for the time doth change his nature —
 The man that hath no music in himself,
 Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
 Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils ;
 The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
 And his affections dark as Erebus—
 Let no such man be trusted. *

There is also a beautiful allusion made to the light of a candle, in this place, which, with the moral deduced from it, is, I think, worthy to be noted here.

Portia and Nerissa.

Portia. How far that little candle throws its beams !
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

So says the Scripture, " Let your light so shine." And in the continuation of the same dialogue, the effects of time, circumstance, comparison, and occasion, are beautifully and justly pointed out :

* *Hic niger est ; hunc tu, Romane, Caveto.*

HOR.

Nerissa.

Nerissa. When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

Portia. So doth the greater glory dim the less.

A substitute shines brightly as a king,
Until a king be by ; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Musick, hark !

Nerissa. It is your music, Madam, of the house.

Portia. Nothing is good, I see, without *respect* * —

Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

Nerissa. Silence bestows the virtue on it, Madam.

Portia. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,

When neither is attended ; and, I think,
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season seasoned are
To their right praise, and true perfection ?

*

*

*

The next quotation, and the last I shall transcribe from this Play, is in the same Scene ; where Portia accosts her husband's friend, Anthonio, on his first visit to her, after the catastrophe of the piece has been wound up :

Sir, you are welcome to our house—

It must appear in other ways than words ;

Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

In this speech she very justly expresses the true sentiment of affection, which renders professions needless, where intentions are sincere.

* That is, reference to time, place, or other circumstance.

A S Y O U L I K E I T.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

A DUKE, exiled from his dominions.

AMIENS, }
JAQUES, } attending upon the Duke in his banish-
A LORD, } ment.

OLIVER, eldest Son to Sir Rowland de Boys.

ORLANDO, his brother.

ADAM, an old Steward of Sir Rowland de Boys.

TOUCHSTONE, an Attendant on Celia and Rosalind.

CORIN, an old Shepherd.

SYLVIUS, a young one.

W O M E N.

ROSALIND, Daughter to the Duke.

CELIA, Daughter to Frederick, his Brother, the
Usurper.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

THIS Play begins with a reflection on the *first*, and I may add the *principal*, concern in life, the education of children. Men are often more sedulous in training the brutes of their kennels, their mews and their stables, than they seem to be about the heirs of their blood, their fortunes, or their honours. In sad truth may it be said, that we seldom meet with a jockey, an huntsman, or a sportsman, who is half so *well-bred* as his horses, his hawks, or his hounds.

Orlando, speaking of the unkindness of his elder brother and guardian, says,

For my part, he keeps me rustically at home ; or, to speak more properly, *sties* me here at home, unkept ; for call you that keeping, for a gentleman of my birth, that differs not from the *stalling of an ox* ? His horses are bred better ; for besides that they are fair with their feeding, they are taught their manage ; and to that end riders dearly hired ; but I, his brother, gain nothing under him but growth ; for the which the animals on his dunghills are as much bound to him as I. Besides this Nothing that he so plentifully gives me, the Something that Nature gave me his countenance seems to take from me. He lets me feed with his hinds, bars me the place of a brother, and, as much as in him lies, mines * my gentility with my education.

S C E N E III.

The last speech, here, though it presents us with no moral, I cannot pass by without remarking, that it seems to be a perfect description of our author's own character.

Oliver, speaking of Orlando, his younger brother, says,

Yet he's gentle ; never schooled, and yet learned ; full of noble device ; and of all sorts enchantingly beloved —

* *Mines, for undermines.*

SCENE IV.

There are some passages very tender, generous, and affecting, in the first part of the dialogue between Rosalind and Celia, who had been bred up from their infancy in friendship together; the first, daughter to the exiled Duke; and the other, child to his brother, the Usurper.

Celia. I prave thee, Rosalind, sweet my coz, be merry.

Rosalind. Dear Celia, I shew more mirth than I am mistress of; and would you yet I were merrier? Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father, you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure.

Celia. Herein I see thou lovest me not with the full weight that I love thee. If my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the Duke my father, so thou hadst been still with me, I could have taught my love to take thy father for mine; and so wouldst thou, if the truth of thy love to me were so righteously tempered, as mine is to thee.

Rosalind. Well, I will forget the condition of my estate, and rejoice in yours.

Celia. You know, my father hath no child but me, nor none is like to have; and, truly, when he dies, thou shalt be his heir; for what he hath taken away from thy father perforce, I will render thee again in affection—By mine honour, I will—And when I break that oath, let me turn monster—Therefore, my sweet Rose, my dear Rose, be merry.

The same fondness between them is repeated in the tenth Scene of the same Act, upon Rosalind's being commanded to quit the dominions of the Usurper.

Celia. O my poor Rosalind, where wilt thou go?

Wilt thou change fathers? I will give thee mine—

I charge thee, be not thou more grieved than I am.

Rosalind. I have more cause.

Celia. Thou hast not, cousin;

Prithee, be chearful knowest thou not, the Duke

Has banished me, his daughter?

Rosalind. That he hath not.

Celia. No? Hath not? Rosalind lacks then the love

Which teacheth me that thou and I are one—

Shall we be Sundered? Shall we part, sweet girl?

No, let my father seek another heir—

Therefore devise with me, how we may fly;

Whither

Whither to go, and what to bear with us ;
 And do not seek to take your change upon you,
 To bear your griefs yourself, and leave me out :
 For by this heaven, now at our sorrows pale,
 Say what thou canst, I'll go along with thee.

* * *

As there are many vices in morals that are injurious to society, and which the laws have not stigmatized, or possibly cannot sufficiently provide against, the reprehensions of Satire, under proper restrictions, may perhaps be deemed a necessary supplement to legislation. The most worthless person would chuse to sin in secret, as not being able to endure the being rendered an object of public detestation or ridicule ; the fear of being *pointed* at has often laid a restraint on vice ; in which sense *the finger* may be said to be stronger than *the arm*. Othello pathetically describes such a situation :

“ But, alas ! to make me
 “ A fixed figure for the hand of Scorn
 “ To point his *slow unmoving finger* at.”

The passage which gave rise to these reflections, is in this fourth Scene, where Celia interrupts Touchstone, in his abuse of an absent person :

Enough ! Speak no more of him ; you'll be whipt for taxation, one of these days.

Touchstone. The more pity, that fools may not speak wisely, what wise men do foolishly.

Celia. By my troth, thou sayest true ; for since the little wit that fools have was silenced *, the little foolery that wise men have makes a great show.

* * *

S C E N E VIII.

There is a very proper hint given here to women, not to deviate from the prescribed rules and decourums of their sex. Whenever they venture to step

* Alluding to the *jesters*, that were formerly entertained by kings, and were the only courtiers that were suffered to speak their minds. *This office has been long abolished.*

the least out of *their walk*, in life, they are too generally apt to *wander astray*.

Rosalind. Oh, how full of briars is this working-day world !

Celia. They are but burs, cousin, thrown upon thee, in holiday foolery ; if we walk not in the trodden paths, our very petticoats will catch them.

SCENE X.

Rosalind, speaking of disguising herself in man's apparel, gives a good description of a swaggering bully :

Were it not better,
Because that I am more than common tall,
That I did suit me all points like a man ?
A gallant curtle-ax upon my thigh,
A boar-spear in my hand, (and in my heart
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will)
I'll have a swashing and a martial outsize,
As many other mannish cowards have,
That do out-face it with their semblances †.

A C T II. SCENE I.

The first speech in this Scene is rich in reflection upon the new-moulding faculty of use or habit, the preference of a *sincere* country life to a *false* city one, the advantages of adversity, and the benefits of retired contemplation.

The Duke, Amiens, and other Lords, in the forest of Arden.

Duke. Now, my co-mates, and brothers in exile,
Hath not *old custom* made this life more sweet,
Than that of painted pomp † ? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court ?
Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
The seasons' difference ; as, the icy fang,
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind ;
Which when it bites and blows upon my body,
Even 'till I shrink with cold, I smi'e, and say,
This is no flattery ; these are counsellors,
That feelingly persuade me what I am.
Sweet are the uses of adversity,

† See Portia's speech in the fifth Scene, Third Act, of the Merchant of Venice, in this Work, for a parallel passage of female sportive humour.

† See first observation on Scene IV, Act V. of The Two Gentlemen of Verona, on the power of Use or Habit.

Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head * :
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
*Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.*
I would not change it.

Amiens. Happy is your Grace,
That can translate the stubbornness of fortune
Into so quiet and so sweet a stile.

In the continuation of the same dialogue, some humane sentiments are thrown out on the subject of hunting, with an affecting description given of a wounded deer ; and also some moral allusions from human life to the different circumstances and situations of the poor victim, which must equally engage the thought and feeling of the reader.

Duke. Come, shall we go and kill us venison ?
And yet it irks me, the poor dappled fools,
Being native burghers of this desert city,
Should in their own confines, with forked heads
Have their round haunches gored.

First Lord. Indeed, my Lord,
The melancholy Jaques † grieves at that ;
And in that kind swears you no more usurp
Than doth your brother that hath banished you ‡.
To day my Lord of Amiens and myself,
Did steal behind him, as he lay along
Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
Upon the brook that brawls along this wood ;
To the which place a poor sequestered stag,
That from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt,
Did come to languish ; and indeed, my Lord,
*The wretched animal heaved forth such groans,
That their discharge did stirich his leathern coat
Almost to bursting ; and the big round tears
Coursed one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase—*And thus the hairy fool,
Much marked of the melancholy Jaques,
Stood on the extremest verge of the swift brook,
Augmenting it with tears—

Duke. But what said Jaques ?
Did he not moralize this spectacle ?

* This was an ancient notion.

† A character distinguished for humanity, contemplation, and contempt of the world, and consequently, for singularity.

‡ That is, *you usurp as much.*

First Lord. O yes, into a thousand families.

First, for his weeping in the needful stream—
 Poor Deer, quoth he, thou makest a testament,
 As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more
 To that which had too much. Then, being alone,
 Left and abandoned of his velvet friends—

'Tis right, quoth he, thus misery doth part
 The flux of company. Anon, a careless herd,
 Full of the pasture, jumps along by him,
 And never stays to greet him—Ay, quoth Jaques,
 Sweep on, ye fat and greasy citizens,

'Tis just the fashion; wherefore do you look
 Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there?
 Thus most ineffectively he pierceth through
 The body of the country, city, court,
 Yea, and of this our life; swearing, that we
 Are mere usurpers, tyrants, and, what's worse,
 To fright the animals, and to kill them up
 In their assigned and native dwelling place.

Duke. And did you leave him in this contemplation?

Second Lord. We did, my Lord, weeping and commenting,
 Upon the *jobbing Deer*—

Duke. Shew me the place;
 I love to cope him in these sullen fits,
 For then he's full of matter.

Whoever could read the above description, and
cat venison, on the same day, must have a better
 stomach, or a stouter heart, than they would do well
 to boast of—Such *melancholy*, such *sullen fits*, as these
 of Jaques, have something more charming in them,
 than all

“The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears.”

S C E N E III.

The dangers of pre-eminence and virtue in a wicked
 and envious world, are finely noted here.

Adam meeting Orlando, after he had conquered
 the Usurper's champion:

What! my young master? Oh, my gentle master,
 Oh, my sweet master! Oh, you memory
 Of old Sir Rowland! why, what make you here?
Why are you virtuous? Why do people love you?

And

*And wherefore are you gentle, strong, and valiant ?
 Why would you be so fond to overcome
 The boney prizer* of the humorous † Duke ?
 Your praise is come too swiftly home before you.
 Know you not, master, to some kind of men,
 Their graces serve them but as enemies ?
 No more do yours ; your virtues, gentle master,
 Are sanctified and holy traitors to you.
 O what a world is this, when what is comely
 Evvenoms him that bears it.*

* * *

When Adam counsels him to fly from the persecution of his cruel brother, his answer expresses a noble and virtuous acquiescence in any state of misery or danger, rather than submit to support himself by base or dishonest means :

Orlando. What, would'st thou have me go and beg my food ?
 Or with a base and boisterous sword enforce
 A thievish living on the common road ?
 This I must do, or know not what to do—
 Yet this I cannot do, do how I can ;
 I rather will subject me to the malice
 Of a diverted ‡ blood, and bloody brother.

There is a charming glow of affection, gratitude, and spirit, in the reply made by Adam ; with a pleasing description of the virtue and sobriety of the antient Peasantry of England ; and the difference of manners and morals between those times and the more modern ones, is well remarked upon,

Adam. But do not so—I have five hundred crowns,
 The thrifty hire I saved under your father,
 Which I did store, to be my foster nurse,
 When service should in my old limbs lie lame,
 And unregarded age in corners thrown—
 Take that, and *He that doth the ravens feed,*
Yea, providentially caters for the sparrow,
Be comfort to my age ! Here is the gold,
 All this I give you, *let me be your servant—*
Tho' I look old, yet I am strong and lusty ;
For in my youth I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood ;

* *Wife-lar.*

† *For humorous.*

‡ *For estranged.*

*Nor did I with unbastful forehead woo
The means of weakness and debility;
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,
Frothy, but kindly *. Let me go with you;
I'll do the business of a younger man,
In all your business and necessities.*

Orlando. Oh! good old man, how well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world,
When service sweat for duty, not for meed!
Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
Where none will sweat, but for promotion;
And having that, do cloak their service up,
Even with the having. It is not so with thee—
But, poor old man, thou prun'st a rotten tree,
That cannot so much as a blossom yield,
In lieu of all thy pains and husbandry—
But come thy ways, we'll go along together;
And ere we have thy youthful wages spent,
We'll light upon some settled low Content.

Adam. Master, go on; and I will follow thee,
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty—
From seventeen years 'till now almost fourscore,
Here lived I, but now live here no more.
At seventeen years many their fortune seek;
But at fourscore, it is too late a week;
*Yet fortune cannot recompence me better,
Than to die well, and not my master's debtor.*

S C E N E IV.

The nature and follies of love are here extremely well described, between the several speakers.

Silvius. O Corin, that thou knewest how I do love her!

Corin. I partly guess; for I have loved, ere now.

Silvius. No, Corin, being old, thou canst not guess;
'Tho' in thy youth thou wast as true a lover
As ever sighed upon a midnight pillow;
But if thy love were ever like to mine,
(As, sure, I think, did never man love so)
How many actions most ridiculous
Hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy?

Corin. Into a thousand that I have forgotten.

Silvius. O, thou didst then ne'er love so heartily.
If thou rememberest not the slightest folly

* Cicero says, *A well spent youth fore'odes an healthy age.*

That ever love did make thee run into ;
 Thou hast not loved—
 Or if thou hast not fate, as I do now,
 Wearing the hearer in thy mistress' praise ;
 Thou hast not loved——
 Or if thou hast not broke from company,
 Abruptly, as my passion now makes me ;
 Thou hast not loved——
 O Phebe ! Phebe ! Phebe !

[Exit.]

Rosalind. Alas, poor shepherd ! Searching of thy wound, I have,
 by hard adventure, found my own.

Touchstone. And I mine. I remember, when I was in love, I
 broke my sword upon a stone, and bid him take that for coming
 a-nights to Jane Smile ; and I remember the kissing of her *latlet* *,
 and the cow's dugs that her pretty chopt hands had milked ; and I
 remember the wooing a peascod instead of her, from whom I took
 two peas, and giving her them again, said, with weeping tears,
 Wear these for my sake. We that are true lovers run into strange
 capers ; but as all is mortal in nature, so is all nature in love
mortal † in folly.

There is a very pretty poem on the same subject,
 and which seems to have taken its hint from this
 passage in Shakespeare, though the instances are dif-
 ferent and more in number, written by Miss *Aikin*,
 among a collection of her's lately published, which I
 would insert here, but that I suppose every reader of
 taste must be in possession of a work which so well
 deserves a place in the most select libraries ; as doing
 equal honour to literature, and her sex. (See page
 66, of *her Poems*.)

S C E N E V.

The common or modern modes of civility are
 well enough ridiculed, here ; which, however, does
 not by any means reprove the fond expressions of
 affection, or the warm returns of gratitude.

Jaques. Well, then, if ever I thank any man, I'll thank you ;
 but that they call compliments, is like the encounter of two dog-
 apes. And when a man thanks me heartily, methinks I have given
 him a penny, and he renders me the beggarly thanks for it.

* Or *Beetle*, a sort of mallet, which wash-women beat the dirt out of coarse
 linens with, in a pond or stream.

† *Mortal*, for *abounding*. Johnson.

In the same place, the melancholy Jaques, as he is characterized, though he be of a gloomy and unfociable complexion himself, describes a character in one word, that, in my opinion, is still more unqualified for the converse of the world than his own.

When he is told that the Duke has been all the day to look for him, he replies,

And I have been all this day to avoid him. He is too *disputable* * for my company. I think of as many matters as he; but I give heaven thanks, and make no boast of them †.

S C E N E VI.

There is something extremely pathetic and affecting in this short scene between Orlando and Adam, on their pilgrimage.

Adam. Dear master, I can go no further. O, I die for food ! Here lie I down, and measure out my grave. Farewell, kind master !

Orlando. Why, how now, Adam ! no greater heart in thee ? live a little ; comfort a little ; cheer thyself a little. If this uncouth forest yield any thing savage, I will be either food for it, or bring it for food to thee. Thy conceit is nearer death than thy powers. For my sake, be *comfortable* † ; hold death a-while at the arm's end. I will be here with thee presently ; and if I bring thee not something to eat, I'll give thee leave to die ; but if thou diest before I come thou art a mocker of my labour. Well said—thou lookest cheerly ; and I'll be with you quickly. Yet thou liest in the bleak air. Come, I will bear thee to some shelter, and thou shalt not die for the lack of a dinner, if there live any thing in this desert. Cheerly, good Adam.

S C E N E VII.

Trite observations and common-place morals are well exposed here :

Jaques. As I do live by food, I met a fool,
Who laid him down, and bask'd him in the sun,
And railed on lady Fortune in good terms—

* For *disputations*.

† That is, I enjoy my own reflections, but force not my thoughts or opinions upon others.

† For *comforted*.

In good set terms—and yet a motley fool.
 Good morrow, fool, quoth I. No, Sir, quoth he;
 Call me not fool, 'till Heaven hath sent me fortune—
 And then he drew a dial from his poke,
 And looking on it with lack lustre eye,
 Says, very wisely, *It is ten o'clock;*
'Thus we may see, quoth he, *how the world wags:*
'Tis but an hour ago, since it was nine,
And, after one hour more, 'twill be eleven;
And so from hour to hour we ripe and ripe,
And then from hour to hour we rot and rot.

Duke. What fool is this?

Jaques. A worthy fool! one that hath been a courtier,
 And says, if ladies be but young and fair,
 They have the gift to know it—And in his brain,
 Which is as dry as the remainder bisket,
 After a voyage, he hath strange places crammed
 With observations, the which he vents
 In mangled forms.

In the same scene there is a good defence made for
 general satire.

Jaques, being accused of slander, says,

Why who cries out on pride,
 That can therein tax any private party?
 Doth it not flow as hugely as the sea,
 Till that the very very means do ebb?
 What woman in the city do I name,
 When that I say the city-woman bears
 The cost of princes on unworthy shoulders?
 Who can come in, and say, that I mean her,
 When such a one as she, such is her neighbour?
 Or what is he of basest function,
 That says, his bravery is not on my cost,
 Thinking that I mean him, but therein suits
 His folly to the metal of my speech?
 There then; how then? what then? let me see wherein
 My tongue hath wronged; for, *if it do him right,*
'Then he hath wronged himself; if he be free,
Why then my taxing, like a wild goose, flies,
Unclaim'd of any man.

See the last remark on Scene IV. Act I. of this
 Play.

SCENE

S C E N E VIII.

The following passage requires no comment to point out its beauties, or to mark its impresson.

Orlando, travelling through the forest, with his poor old friend, leaves him, for a while, to go in quest of food, as shewn before, in the last Scene but one; and coming where the Duke and his train are at dinner, draws his sword, to force some of the viands from them. The former Scene, already quoted, prepares us finely for Orlando's violence here, which must otherwise have created disgust, and seem to have been inconsistent with his expression, in the third Scene above, where he says to Adam,

“ What, would'st thou have me go and beg my food ?
 “ *Or with a base and boisterous sword enforce*
 “ *A thievish living on the common road ?*”

Upon this challenge, the Duke says,

What would'st thou have ? Your gentleness shall force,
 More than your force move us to gentleness.

Orlando. I almost die for food, and let me have it.

Duke. Sit down and feed, and welcome to our table.

Orlando. Speak you so gently ? Pardon me, I pray you ;
 I thought that all things had been savage here ;
 And therefore put I on the countenance
 Of stern commandment. But whate'er you are,
 That in this desert inaccessible,
 Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
Loss and neglect the creeping hours of time ;
 If ever you have looked on better days,
 If ever been where bells have knolled to church,
 If ever fate at any good man's feast,
If ever from your eyelids wiped a tear,
And know what 'tis to pity, and be pitied,
 Let gentleness my strong enforcement be,
 In the which hope I blush, and hide my sword.

Duke. True is it, that we have seen better days,
 And have with holy bell been knolled to church,
 And fate at good mens feasts, *and wiped our eyes*
Of drops that sacred pity hath engendered ;
 And therefore sit you down in gentleness,

And

And take upon command what help we have,
That to your wanting may be ministered.

Orlando. Then but forbear your food a little while,
Whiles, like a doe, I go to find my fawn,
And give it food. There is an old poor man,
Who after me hath many a weary step
Limped in pure love ; 'till he be first sufficed,
Oppressed with two weak evils, age and hunger,
I will not touch a bit.

Duke. Go, find him out,
And we will nothing waste, till your return.

Orlando. I thank ye ; and be blessed for your comfort. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E IX.

On Orlando's going out, the Duke says,

Thou seest, we are not all alone unhappy —
This wide and universal theatre
Presents more woeful pageants, than the scene
Wherein we play.

Upon which allusion, Jaques gives a fine picturesque and dramatic description of life and character, in the following speech :

All the world's a Stage,
And all the men and women merely Players ;
They have their *exits* and their entrances ;
And one man in his time plays many parts ;
His Acts being seven ages *. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms :
And then, the whining school-boy with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then, the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eye-brow. Then, a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the Pard ;
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel ;
Seeking the bubble reputation,
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then, the justice,
In fair round belly, with good capon lined,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws, and modern instances ;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered Pantaloon †,

* The old plays were divided into seven Acts. Warburton.

† Alluding to that general character in the Italian Comedy.

With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side ;
 His youthful hose well saved, a world too wide
 For his shrunk shank ; and his big manly voice,
 Turning again towards childish tremble, pipes,
 And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
 That ends this strange eventful history,
 Is second childishness, and mere oblivion,
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.

S C E N E X.

Some melancholy reflections on the base vice and most heinous sin of ingratitude, are sweetly comprized in the following Air :

Blow, blow, the winter wind,
 That art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude ;
 Thy tooth is not so keen,
 Because thou art not seen,
 Altho' thy breath be rude.
 Heigh ho ! heigh ho ! unto the green holly ;
 Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly ;
 Then heigh ho, the holly !
 This life is most jolly*.
 Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
 That dost not bite so nigh
 As benefits forgot ;
 Tho' thou the waters warp,
 Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
 Heigh ho ! &c.

A C T III. S C E N E III.

No situation of life is satisfactory to us ; there is something we like, in all, but none that we would chuse to take up with *for better for worse*. This impatience, this dissatisfaction, in the mind of man, proclaims aloud that this world was never designed as our place of rest ; and to refer us for it *to the grave*, is but infidel mockery, surely.

* This line is left without a comment, in all the editions ; nor am I able to supply one upon it. Such a life as is here described, appears rather to be a *fad*, than a *jolly* one. I am as much at a loss, also, to guess why the *holly* is particularly invoked here.

I am well aware, that after so serious a reflection, the following passage may be deemed too slight an illustration of the remark; but as it gave rise to it, I think in justice that I ought to quote it here; for even a straw is an argument of Providence, to the contemplative mind.

Corin and Touchstone.

Corin. And how like you this shepherd's life, Mr. Touchstone?

Touchstone. Truly, shepherd, in respect of itself, it is a good life; but in respect that it is a shepherd's life, it is naught. In respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. Now, in respect that it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not in the court, it is tedious. As it is a spare life, look you, it fits my humour well; but as there is no more plenty in it, it goes much against my stomach.

S C E N E IV.

The common sing-song of poetry is well observed upon, here; such verses, as Horace says, a person may compose two hundred of, *standing on one leg**, “without one thought to interrupt the song.”

Rosalind, reading a paper written in her praise:

From the East to Western Ind,
No jewel is like Rosalind.
Her worth, being mounted on the wind,
Thro' all the world bears Rosalind.
All the pictures, fairest limned,
Are but black to Rosalind.
Let no face be kept in mind,
But the face of Rosalind.

Upon which Touchstone says,

I'll rhyme you so, eight years together; dinners, and suppers, and sleeping hours, excepted. It is the right butter-woman's rate to market. This is the very false gallop of verses. Why do you infect yourself with them?

S C E N E VIII.

The different computations of time which are made by persons variously interested in its progress,

* *Stans pede in uno.*

sion, are well and humorously described in this place.

Rosalind and Orlando.

Rosalind. I pray you, what is't a clock?

Orlando. You should ask me, what time o'day—there's no clock in the forest.

Rosalind. Then there's no true lover in the forest; else, sighing every minute, and groaning every hour, would detect *the lazy foot of time*, as well as a clock.

Orlando. And why not *the swift foot of time*? Had not that been as proper?

Rosalind. By no means, Sir. Time travels in divers paces, with divers persons.—I'll tell you whom time trots withal, whom time ambles withal, whom time gallops withal, and whom he stands still withal.

Orlando. I prithee, whom doth he trot withal?

Rosalind. Marry, he trots hard * with a young maid, between the contract of her marriage, and the day it is solemnized. If the interim be but a se'nnight, time's pace is so hard, that it seems the length of seven years.

Orlando. Whom ambles time withal?

Rosalind. With a priest that lacks Latin, and a rich man that hath not the gout; for the one sleeps easily, because he cannot study; and the other lives merrily, because he feels no pain: the one lacking the burden of lean and wasteful learning; and the other knowing no burden of heavy tedious penury. These time ambles withal.

Orlando. Whom doth he gallop withal?

Rosalind. With a thief to the gallows; for though he go softly as foot can fall, he thinks himself too soon there.

Orlando. Who stays it withal?

Rosalind. With lawyers in the vacation; for they sleep between term and term; and then they perceive not how time moves.

S C E N E X.

Enter Rosalind and Celia.

Rosalind. Never talk to me—I will weep.

Celia. Do, I prithee; but yet have the grace to consider that tears do not become a man †.

Rosalind. But have I not cause to weep?

Celia. As good cause as one would desire; therefore, weep.

* By *hard* is meant *high*, which is the most fatiguing rate to a traveller.

† She was then dressed in a male habit.

Rosalind.

Rosalind. His very hair is of the dissembling colour.

Celia. Something browner than Judas's—Marry, his kisses are Judas's own children.

Rosalind. No, faith, his hair is of a good colour.

Celia. An excellent colour. Your chestnut was ever the only colour.

Rosalind. And his kissing is as full of sanctity, as the touch of holy beard.

Celia. He hath bought a pair of cast lips of Diana; a Nun of Winter's sisterhood kisses not more religiously; the very ice of chastity is in them.

The abrupt commencement of this dialogue lead^s us to suppose, that it is but the continuation of one they had engaged in before their appearance in this scene, in which Celia had been endeavouring to quiet Rosalind's fears, upon her lover's having broke his promise of meeting her; and whether from being tired with her obstinacy, or resolving to try her sincerity, she here seems to join in her resentment, by agreeing with her in every thing; which has an effect very natural in all such cases, that the plaintiff immediately becomes defendant, whenever the person beloved happens to be censured by any one else but themselves.

Hermione says,

My heart, tho' full of rage, was free from malice,
And all my anger but excess of love *.

And the danger of interfering between man and wife, I should hope arises from this principle. Resentments may interrupt affection; but they must rise to something more, to cancel one that ever has been thoroughly conceived.

S C E N E XI.

Rosalind. Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.

This is a just thought; and it would be well if it were more attended to. No persons have a right to censure others, who are not free from blame themselves. This maxim, if extended to the strictness of it, would silence all scandal, detraction, and re-

* Distrest Mother.

proach ; and indeed it has been often observed, that the most faultless persons are generally the least severe. Heaven has more mercy, than man.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

As I have already given the reader some extracts of the character and sentiments of the *melancholy* Jaques, in this Play, which must give a favourable impression of him ; I think he will be well pleased to see him introduced once more, particularly in a part where he gives a description of himself, as he does in this scene, and where the lively Rosalind also equally and justly condemns the extremes, both of a merry and a grave complexion of mind and manners.

Rosalind and Jaques.

Rosalind. They say, you are a melancholy fellow.

Jaques. I am so—I do love it better than laughing.

Rosalind. Those who are in the extremity of either, are abominable fellows ; and betray themselves to every modern censure, worse than drunkards.

Jaques. Why, 'tis good to be sad, and say nothing.

Rosalind. Why, then, 'tis good to be a post.

Jaques. I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation ; nor the musician's, which is fantastic ; nor the courtier's, which is proud ; nor the soldier's, which is ambitious ; nor the lawyer's, which is politic ; nor the ladies, which is nice ; nor the lover's, *which is all these* ; but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and, indeed, the fondry contemplation of my travels, on which my often rumination wraps me in a most *humorous* * sadness.

Rosalind. And your experience makes you sad. I had rather have a fool to make me merry, than experience to make me sad—and to travel for it too !

Rosalind then, taking advantage of the word *travel*, gives a description of the *alamode pilgrims* of Shakespeare's times, which may answer full as well for the fashionable *emigrants* of our own days.

Farewel, monsieur traveller ; look, you lisp, and wear strange suits ; disable all the benefits of your own country ; be out of love with

* *Humorous* for *humoursome*.

your nativity, and almost chide God, for making you that countenance you are ; or I shall scarce think you have swam in a *Gondola* ||.

There is something, upon the whole of this sombre character of Jaques, that is interesting, and makes me recollect a French line of some *uncommon*, because *ingenious and indulgent*, Critic, who says,

Un esprit né chagrin, plait par son chagrin même.

S C E N E V.

There is no passion which Shakespeare more frequently, or so poetically describes, as that of love ; and as it is the one which, by its despotism in our youthful years, often forms the destiny of our future life, and holds so immediate a relation to morals, we should suffer no occasion to pass unnoticed, however humorously or ludicrously expressed, which either defines its nature, or remarks upon its effects.

Rosalind. No, that same wicked bastard of Venus, that was begot of thought, conceived of spleen, and born of madness, that blind rascally boy, that abuses every one's eyes, because his own are out, let him be judge how deep I am in love. I tell thee, Aliena, I cannot be out of the sight of Orlando—I'll go find a shadow *, and sigh till he come.

A C T V. S C E N E V.

The uncertainty of opinion in things where the mind is anxious, is hinted at here :

The Duke and Orlando.

Duke. Dost thou believe, Orlando, that the boy
Can do all this that he hath promised ?

Orlando. I sometimes do believe, and sometimes do not ;
As those that fear, they hope, and now they fear †.

|| Venice was then the polite goal, as Paris is now : so that to swim in a *Gondola*, is as if we should say, ride in a *vis-a-vis*, at present.

* *Shadow*, for *shade*.

† This line is thus amended by Dr. Johnson.

SCENE VI.

Touchstone to the Duke.

Rich honesty dwells like a miser, Sir, in a poor house; as your pearl in your foul oyster.

Men who pretend to know the world, are apt to join in the above satire upon mankind, by saying, what I am sorry to repeat, that if we were to seek for honesty, we must look for it, as the Clown hints, among the middle ranks of life.

The punctilios of honour, with regard to the false bravery, or Gothic chivalry of duelling, is admirably jested on in the same scene.

Jaques and Touchstone.

Jaques. But for the seventh cause; how did you find the quarrel on the seventh cause?

Touchstone. Upon a lye seven times removed; as thus, Sir—I did dislike the cut of a certain courtier's beard; he sent me word, if I said his beard was not cut well, he was in the mind it was. This is called the *retort courteous*. If I sent him word again, it was not well cut, he would send me word, he cut it to please himself. This is called the *quip modest*. If again, it was not well cut, he disabled my judgment. This is called the *reply churlish*. If again, it was not well cut, he would answer, I spake not true. This is called the *reproof valiant*. If again, it was not well cut, he would say, I lye. This is called the *countercheck quarrelsome*. And so, the *lye circumstantial*, and the *lye direct*.

Jaques. And how oft did you say that his beard was not well cut?

Touchstone. I durst go no further than the *lye circumstantial*; nor durst he give me the *lye direct*; and so we measured swords, and parted*.

Jaques. Can you nominate in order, now, the degrees of the lye?

Touchstone. O, Sir, we quarrel in print, by the book, as you have books for good manners. I will name you the degrees. The first, the *retort courteous*; the second, the *quip modest*; the third, the *reply churlish*; the fourth, the *reproof valiant*; the fifth, the *countercheck quarrelsome*; the sixth, the *lye with circumstance*; and the seventh, the *lye direct*. All these you may avoid, but the *lye direct*; and you may avoid that too, with an *If*. I knew when seven

* I suppose this must have been an antient usage, to see whether the combatants had entered the lists upon equal terms of chivalry.

justices could not make up a quarrel; but when the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an *If*; as, *If* you said so, then I said so; and they shook hands, and swore brothers. Your *If* is your only peace-maker—Much virtue in an *If*.

Doctor Warburton, in a note on this passage, has quoted a similar one from Fletcher, in his *Queen of Corinth*:

“ Has he familiarly
 “ Disliked your yellow starch, or said your doublet
 “ Was not exactly frenchified? or drawn your sword,
 “ Cried ’twas ill mounted? has he given the lye,
 “ In *circle*, or *oblique*, or *semi-circle*,
 “ Or *direct parallel*? you must challenge him.”

As the humorous satire of Don Quixote came abroad into the world in Shakespeare’s time, perhaps he might have taken a hint for this piece of ridicule from that writing; and Fletcher may have copied his raillery from him again. *Malta* is the only place now where the old Gothic chivalry is still preserved, and that duelling is established by law.

S C E N E VII.

I shall now conclude my remarks on this Play, with a song in this Scene, which comprehends my favourite moral.

A I R.

Wedding is great Juno’s crown,
 O blest bond of board and bed!
 ’Tis Hymen peoples every town,
 High Wedlock then be honoured.
 Honour, high honour, and renown,
 To Hymen, God of every town!

L O V E's

LABOUR LOST.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

THE KING of Navarre.

BIRON,
LONGAVILLE, } three Lords attending upon the King
DUMAIN, } in his retirement.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO, a vain bombastical Spaniard.

MOTH, his Page,

NATHANAEL, a Curate.

HOLOFERNES, a Schoolmaster.

W O M E N.

PRINCESS of France.

ROSALINE,
MARIA, } Ladies attending on the Princess.
CATHARINE, }

LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Laudable ambition for fame, which inspires every person whose character is above contempt, is beautifully described and distinguished from false heroism, in this place. To conquer ourselves is greater than to vanquish others.

The king of Navarre, and three of his principal courtiers, Biron, Longaville, and Dumain, had determined upon a course of retirement and study, for three years, in order to fit themselves the better for their several departments in the state.

King. Let Fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live registered upon our brazen tombs ;
And then grace us in the disgrace of death ;
When, spite of cormorant devouring time,
The endeavour of this present breath may buy
That honour which shall bate his scythe's keen edge,
And make us heirs of all eternity.
Therefore, *brave conquerors !* for so you are
That war against your own affections,
And the huge army of the world's desires ;
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force.
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world ;
Our court shall be a little academy,
Still and contemplative in living arts,

Longaville. I am resolved ; 'tis but a three years fast ;
The mind shall banquet, tho' the body pine—
Fat paunches have lean pates ; and dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but banker out the wits.

Dumain. My loving Lord, Dumain is *mortified* * :
The grosser manner of these world's delights
He throws upon the gross world's baser slaves—
To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die ;
And these are living in philosophy.

Biron, speaking on this latter subject, and justly condemning all study which is not made re-

* *Resigned to abstinence.*

ferable to the real uses or moral purposes of life, says,

Study is like the Heaven's glorious fun,
That will not be deep searched with saucy looks ;
What have continual plodders ever won,
Save base authority from other's books ?
These earthly godfathers of Heaven's lights,
That give a name to every fixed star,
Have no more profit of their shining nights,
Than those that walk, and wot not what they are.
Too much to know, is to know nought but fame ;
And every godfather can give a name.

And again :

So study evermore is overshot ;
While it doth study to have what it would,
It doth forget to do the thing it should ;
And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,
'Tis won, as towns with fire, so won, so lost.

Seneca seems to be of the same opinion with our author, where he says, that " to desire more knowledge than is sufficient for us here, is intemperance."

Upon revising the articles of their mutual agreement, they find that one of them must unavoidably be dispensed with, on account of a particular reason of state, that had not occurred to them in the drawing them up ; upon which the folly and danger of making vows, is very justly descanted on. " They are made," says Doctor Johnson, on this passage, " without sufficient regard to the variations of life, and are, therefore, broken by some unforeseen necessity. They proceed, commonly, from a presumptuous confidence, and a false estimate of human power."

Biron. Necessity will make us all forsworn
Three thousand times within this three years space ;
For every man with his *affects* * is born,
Not by might mastered, but by special grace—
If I break faith, this word shall speak for me ;
I am forsworn on mere necessity.

* Passions, &c.

In the same scene, our author exposes an extraordinary, and yet no uncommon character in life.

The King and his Courtiers.

King. Our court, you know, is haunted
 With a refined traveller of Spain ;
 A man in all the world's new fashion planted,
 That hath a mint of phrases in his brain :
 One whom the music of his own vain tongue
 Doth ravish, like enchanting harmony :
 A man of compliments, whom *right and wrong*
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny.
 This child of Fancy, that Armado hight,
 For interim to our studies, shall relate
 In high-born words the worth of many a knight
 From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate.
 How you delight, my lords, I know not, I ;
 But, I protest, I love to hear him lye ;
 And I will use him for my minstrelsy.

Biron. Armado is a most illustrious wight,
 A man of fine new words, *Fashion's own knight.*

}

The making *right and wrong* equally to chuse him for their arbitrator, is an admirable trait of an obsequious disposition. And since we are upon this subject here, I think it will be better to groupe the rest of the characters in this Play together in this place, though they refer to different scenes in it.

In the Third Scene of this Act, there is a description, which proves that one of the characteristics of the present age is not quite *so modern*, as one might otherwise be apt to imagine.

Moth. You are a gentleman, and a gamesier *.

Armado. I confess both ; they are both the varnish of a compleat man.

In another place, Act II. Scene I. in a dialogue between the princess Maria, Catharine, and Rosaline, speaking of the courtiers, Maria says,

In Normandy saw I this *Longaville* ;
 A man of sovereign parts he is esteemed ;

* Abbe Le Blanc, speaking of the English passion for *Gaming*, says, " they have a way of getting rich with little pains, or begging themselves with little pleasure."

Well fitted in the arts, glorious in arms ;
 Nothing becomes him ill, that he would well.
 The only foil of his fair virtue's gloss,
 If virtue's gloss will stain with any foil,
Is a sharp wit, matched with too blunt a will ;
Whose edge hath power to cut, whose will still wills
It should spare none that come within his power.

Princefs. Some merry-mocking lord, belike—Is't so ?

Maria. They say so most, that most his humours know.

Princefs. Such short-lived wits do wither as they grow.

The latter part of the character of Longaville, above described, is an unhappy quality frequently to the persons themselves, who happen to be infected with it. It often makes enemies, but never once a friend. Even those who are the most maliciously pleased with it against others, still fear it against themselves. Sterne's comparison of the *jester and jestee*, to the *mortgager and mortgagee* † is an excellent and just allusion. The one may forget the debt, but the other will not only remember, but exact the penalty, when *pay-day* comes.

A *personal satirist* may be likened to a *hatchet-man* sitting on the arm of a tree, with his face turned to the trunk, and cutting away before him ; who, when he has dismembered the branch, falls to the ground himself along with it.

Princefs. Who are the rest ?

Catharine. The young Dumain, a well-accomplished youth ;
 Of all that virtue love, for virtue loved ;
 Most power to do most harm, least knowing ill ;
 For he hath wit to make an ill shape good,
 And shape to win grace, tho' he had no wit.
 I saw him at the duke Alençon's once,
 And much too little of that good I saw,
 Is my report to his great worthiness.

Rosaline. Another of these students, at that time
 Was there with him, as I have heard, o'truth ;
 Biron they called him ; but a merrier man,
 Within the limit of becoming mirth,
 I never spent an hour's talk withal.

† In his *Tristram Shandy*.

His eye begets occasion for his wit ;
 For every object that the one doth catch,
 The other turns to a mirth-moving jest ;
 Which his fair tongue (conceit's expositor)
 Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
 That aged ears play truant at his tales,
 And younger hearings are quite ravished ;
 So sweet and voluble is his discourse.

Lastly, In the first Scene of Act IV. there are two characters, which appear the better for being placed in contrast with each other.

Nathanael and Holofernes.

Nathanael. I praise God for you, Sir ; your *reasons* * at dinner have been sharp and sententious ; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affectation, *audacious* † without impudency, learned without *opinion* ‡, and *strange* || without heresy. I did converse this quondam-day with a companion of the king's, who is intitled, nominated, or called, Don Adriano d'Armado.

Holofernes. His humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thraasonical. He is too piqued, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were ; too peregrinate, as I may call it. He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. I abhor such fanatical phantasms, such unsociable and *point-de-vise* companions ; such rackers of Orthography, as to speak *dout* fine, when he should say *doubt* ; *det*, when he should pronounce debt ; d, e, b, t, not d, e, t. He clepeth a *calt*, *caulf* ; *half*, *haulf* ; *neighbour* vocatur *nebour* ; *neigh* abbreviated *ne*—This is *abominable*, which he would pronounce *abominab'e*—It insinuates me of insanity ; to be mad, frantic.

*

*

*

But to return. The pedantry of scholastic definitions, and the verbose stile of law writings, are properly ridiculed, in the second Scene of the First Act, in part of Armado's letter to the king, giving an information of an offence committed against one of his statutes.

So it is—Besieged with fable-coloured melancholy, I did commend the black oppressing humour to the most wholesome physic of

* *Discourse, or conversation.* † Animated. ‡ Opinionativeness. || New.

thy health-giving air ; and as I am a gentleman, betook myself to walk : The time, when ? About the sixth hour, when beasts most graze, birds best peck, and men sit down to that nourishment which is called supper—So much for the time when—Now for the ground which—Which, I mean, I walked upon—It is cyleped thy park—Then for the place where—Where, I mean, I did encounter that obscene and most preposterous event, that draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-coloured ink, which here thou viewest, beholdest, surveyest, or feest—But to the place where. It standeth north-north-east and by east from the west corner of thy curious-knotted garden. There did I see that low-spirited swain, that base minion of thy mirth, that unlettered small-knowing soul, that shallow vassal, which, as I remember, hight *Costard*, sorted, and consorted, contrary to thy established proclaimed edict, and continent canon, with a child of our grand-mother *Eve*, a female ; or, for thy more understanding, a woman—Him have I sent to thee, to receive the meed of punishment, &c.

In the last Scene of this First Act, there is a quaint description given of Love ; but as it is spoken in the person of Armado, whose affected character has been already exposed, I shall insert it here.

Love is a familiar, love is a devil ; there is no evil angel but love—Yet was Sampson so tempted, and he had an excellent strength ; yet was Solomon so seduced, and he had a very good wit—Cupid's But-shaft is too hard for Hercules's club, and therefore too much odds for a Spaniard's rapier—The passado he respects not, the duello he regards not—His disgrace is to be called boy ; but his glory is to subdue men.

A C T S II. and III.

What is worth noting in the Second Act, has already been included in our excursion from the First, and the Third affords us no matter for observation.

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

The false glory of antient heroism is justly censured in the latter part of the following speech.

The Princess, taking the bow to go a stag-shooting, thus argues with herself, on a supposition either of her hitting or missing the quarry :

Thus will I save my credit, on the shoot—
Not wounding, pity would not let me do't ;

If wounding, then it was to shew my skill,
 That, more for praise than purpose, meant to kill.
And, out of question, so it is sometimes ;
Glory grows guilty of detested crimes ;
When for fame's sake, for praise, an outward part,
We bend to that the working of the heart.
As I for praise alone now seek to spill
The poor Deer's blood, that my heart means no ill.

S C E N E IV.

Part of a speech here, is very worthy of a quotation ; first, as it is one of the many fond descriptions of love given us by our Author ; and next, as it shews the effects of this passion, in higher instances than any of his former ones, by urging its advantages to the minds and manners, as well as its operations upon the affections, of men ; and in this light, it may be considered as a good comment on the fable of Cymon and Iphigenia.

Biron, speaking to the King, Dumain, and Longaville, after they had all fallen in love, against the phlegmatic and fruitless study of monastic life, in a seclusion from all female converse, says,

For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
 In *leaden* contemplation have found out
 Such fiery numbers, as the prompting eyes
 Of beauteous tutors have enriched you with ?
 Other slow arts intirely keep the brain ;
 And, therefore, finding barren practisers,
 Scarce shew a harvest of their heavy toil—
 But love, first learned in a lady's eyes,
 Lives not alone immured in the brain ;
 But with the motion of all elements,
 Courses as swift as thought in every power ;
 And gives to every power a double power,
 Above their functions and their offices.
 It adds a precious seeing to the eye :
 A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind ;
 A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
 When the suspicious *hand* of theft is stopt *.
 Love's feeling is more soft and sensible,
 Than are the tender horns of cockled snails ;
 Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus rofs in taste ;

* The fears of a thief are naturally alarmed upon the slightest noise. I have ventured to alter *head* to *hand*, in the above line.

For *flavour**, is not love an Hercules,
 Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
 Subtle as Sphinx; as sweet and musical
 As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair;
 And when love speaks, the voice of all the Gods
 Make heaven drowsy with the harmony!
 Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
 Until his ink were tempered with love's *tears*†;
 O then his lines would ravish savage *breasts*,
 And plant in tyrants mild humanity‡.
 From women's eyes this doctrine I derive;
 They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
 They are the books, the arts, the academies,
 That shew, contain, and nourish all the world;
 Else none at all in aught proves excellent.

A C T V. S C E N E III.

That persons of the best understandings are generally remarked to be the greatest fools in love, the superiority of their talents adding strength to their passion, is well noted in the following observations; which, as Doctor Johnson says upon this passage, “are worthy of a man who has surveyed
 “human nature with the closest attention.”

The Princess, Rosaline, and Maria.

Princess. None are so surely caught, when they are caught,
 As wit turned fool; folly, in wisdom hatched,
 Hath wisdom's warrant, and the help of school;
 And wits' own grace to grace a learned fool.

Rosaline. The blood of youth burns not in such excess,
 As gravity's revolt to wantonness.

Maria. Folly in fools bears not so strong a note,
 As foolery in the wise, when wit doth dote;
 Since all the power thereof it doth apply
 To prove by wit, worth in simplicity.

These ladies seem to speak very philosophically upon this subject; but might yet have improved

* The word, in the text, is *valour*, but Theobald changes it to *savour*, in order to complete the enumeration of the senses; and I prefer the word *flavour*, as this refers more to fruits, as the other to viands.

† I prefer *tears* to *figs*, which is the text word; as water is a fitter element than wind to temper ink with.—The last word of the next line I have also changed from *ears* to *breasts*, in order to elude the rhyme.

‡ The text word is *humility*—I have ventured to change it to one that is more fitly opposed to *tyranny*.

their

their lecture, by observing on as certain a fact, still more extraordinary; which is, that to render a man of sense the compleatest slave in love, he must be captivated *by a fool*; provided she has, what is generally met with in persons of that character, a proper proportion of art or cunning.

Sense is always a match for sense, and can be overreached by folly only; as here no danger is apprehended to put a man on his guard, the fair one's wiles seeming to be all nature, *naïveté*, and charming simplicity; and 'tis natural to humour those fondlings, whom 'tis thought vain to reason with.

SCENE X.

I shall finish my remarks on this Play, with a passage in this Scene, which continues the subject above last mentioned, and is a further description of the nature and effects of that passion:

Biron, to the ladies.

For your fair sakes have we neglected time,
 Played foul play with our oaths; your beauty, ladies,
 Hath much deformed us, fashioning our humours
 Even to the opposed end of our intents;
 And what in us hath seemed ridiculous,
 As love is full of unbecoming strains,
 All wanton as a child, skipping in vain,
 Formed by the eye, and therefore like the eye,
 Full of straying shapes, of habits and of forms,
 Varying in subjects as the eye doth rowl,
 To every fancied object in his glance;
 With party-coated presence of loose love
 Put on by us, if, in your heavenly eyes,
 Have mis-becomed our oaths and gravities,
 Those heav'nly eyes that look into those faults,
 Suggested us to make them.

T H E

W I N T E R ' s T A L E .

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

LEONTES, King of Sicilia.
POLIXENES, King of Bohemia.
FLORIZEL, Prince of Bohemia.
CAMILLO, Sicilian Lords.
CLEOMINES,
Another Sicilian Lord.
ARCHIDAMUS, a Bohemian Lord.
A GENTLEMAN.
AUTOLICUS, a Sharper.
CLOWN.

W O M E N.

HERMIONE, Queen of Sicilia.
PERDITA, Daughter to Leontes and Hermione.
PAULINA, a Lady of the Sicilian Court.

THE
WINTER'S TALE.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

THE rational, sociable, and friendly manner in which crowned heads used formerly to live pleasantly with one another, is described here—Why is it no longer so? Does modern polity oppose itself to humanity? Kings may have mistresses, indeed; but friend or favourite they must have none. What amends can the whole *regalia* of their solitary pomp afford them, for being denied one of the sweetest, the dearest, and the most virtuous enjoyments of life; a manly sympathy of affections, and a chaste intercourse of souls! Modern kings may say, as Richard the Third did, *I am myself alone*; *Incedo solus*; but not in the happy sense that Horace meant it—the *quacunq̃ libido est* is wanting.

Camillo. Sicilia cannot shew himself over-kind to Bohemia; they were trained together in their childhoods; and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection, which cannot chuse but branch now. Since their more mature dignities and royal necessities made separation of their society, their encounters, though not personal, have been royally attorned with interchange of gifts, letters, loving embassies; that they have seemed to be together, though absent; shook hands, as over a vault; and embraced, as it were, from the ends of opposed winds. The heavens continue their loves!

Archidamus. I think there is not in the world either malice or matter to alter it.

*

*

*

The passion in mankind for life, and the pretences they make to themselves for still wishing to defer their departure from time to time, is well enough pointed out in the following passage:

Camillo,

Camillo, speaking of the young Prince of Sicilia, says,

He makes old hearts fresh ; they that went on crutches, ere he was born, desire yet their life to see him a man.

Archidamus. *Would they else be content to die?*

Camillo. Yes, if there were no other excuse why they should desire to live.

Archidamus. *If the king had no son, they would desire to live on crutches till he had one.*

S C E N E II.

The happy state of youth, and consequently of innocence, is here well described :

Polixenes. We were, fair Queen,

Two lads that thought there was no more behind,
But such a day to-morrow as to-day,
And to be boy eternal.

We were as twinned lambs, that did frisk i' th' sun,
And bleat the one at th' other : what we changed,
Was innocence for innocence ; we knew not
The doctrine of ill-doing ; no, nor dreamed
That any did—Had we pursued that life,
And our weak spirits ne'er been higher reared
With stronger blood, we should have answered heaven
Boldly, *not guilty ; the imposition cleared **,
Hereditary ours.

S C E N E III.

When Leontes, having conceived a jealousy of Polixenes, commands Camillo, whom he had appointed cup-bearer to his guest, to poison him ; this good man makes an admirable reflection on disloyalty and rebellion, in the following soliloquy :

Camillo. If I could find example

Of thousands that had struck anointed kings,
And flourished after, I'd not do't : but since
Nor brass, nor stone, nor parchment, bears not one,
Let villainy itself forswear it.

A C T II. S C E N E III.

The dumb rhetoric of innocence is finely noted here. When Paulina, the Queen's friend, purposes

* Setting aside *the Fall of Man*.

to present the new-born child of Leontes before him, in hopes of abating his resentment against its mother, she says,

We do not know

How he may soften at the sight o' th' child :

The silence often of pure innocence

Persuades, when speaking fails.

A C T III. S C E N E II.

The unhappy Queen of Sicilia, when she is called upon her public trial for a supposed adultery, speaks with a noble spirit of parental sentiment on the occasion.

Hermione. Behold me

A fellow of the royal bed, which *owe* *

A moiety of the throne, a great king's daughter,

The mother to a hopeful prince, here standing

To prate and talk for life and honour, 'fore

Who please to come and hear, For life, I prize it

As I weigh grief, which I would spare—*For honour,*

'Tis a derivative from me to mine,

And only that I stand for.

The beautiful sentiment expressed in the last lines, which must draw tears of pity from virtuous mothers, and should those of another kind from vicious ones, puts me in mind of a parallel passage in Scripture—
“ A mother in dishonour is a reproach to her
“ children †”.

S C E N E S III. and IV.

The sudden ebbs of warm and violent tempers, with the *revealing* nature of a guilty conscience ; which is apt to confess its crime even before 'tis charged with it, as Leontes does here, with regard to the intended murder of Polixenes, which remained yet a secret in his own breast ; are strongly depicted in this Scene.

Leontes, on hearing that his son had died of grief, and seeing his wife fall into a swoon on that

* For *own*,

† Ecclesiasticus, Chapter iii. verse 17.

event, is suddenly struck with compassion and remorse.

Leontes. Apollo's angry, and the heavens themselves
Do strike at my injustice—How now, there?

[*Hermione faints.*]

Paulina. This news is mortal to the queen—Look down,
And see what death is doing.

Leontes. Take her hence ;
Her heart is but o'er-charged ; she will recover.

[*Exeunt Paulina and Ladies with Hermione.*]

I have too much believed my own suspicion—
'Beseech you tenderly apply to her
Some remedies for life. Apollo, pardon
My great prophaneness 'gainst thy oracle * !
I'll reconcile me to Polixenes,
New woo my queen, recall the good Camillo,
Whom I proclaim a man of truth, of mercy ;
For being transported by my jealousies,
To bloody thoughts and to revenge, I chose
Camillo for the minister, to poison
My friend Polixenes ; which had been done,
But that the good mind of Camillo tardied
My swift command ; tho' I with death, and with
Reward, did threaten, and encourage him,
Not doing it, and being done ; he, most humane,
And filled with honour, to my kingly guest
Unclassed my practice, quit his fortunes here,
Which you knew great, and to the certain hazard
Of all incertainties himself commended,
No richer than his honour—Now he glitters
Through my dark rust ! and now his piety
Does my deeds make the blacker !

S C E N E V.

Paulina too, being likewise a person of strong passions and an ungovernable temper, shews as quick a revulsion in the midst of her rage against Leontes, upon finding him repentant, though she had even told him, the moment before, that neither penance nor penitence itself could aught avail him.

Lord. Say no more ;
Howe'er the business goes, you have made fault
I th' boldness of your speech †.

* Which had vouched the innocence of Hermione.

† This fault is reprehended before, by Gonzalez, in the *Tempest*, Act I. Scene I. See the second speech there, in this Work.

Paulina. I am sorry for't.

All faults I make, when I shall come to know them,
 I do repent—Alas, I've shewed too much
 The rashness of a woman; he is touched
 To the nobler heart. What's gone, and what's past help,
 Should be past grief. Do not receive affliction
 At my petition, I beseech you; rather
 Let me be punished, that have minded you
 Of what you should forget. Now, good my Liege,
 Sir, royal Sir, forgive a foolish woman;
 The love I bore your queen—lo, fool again!
*I'll speak of her no more—nor of your children—
 I'll not remember you of my own lord,
 Who is lost too—Take you your patience to you,
 And I'll say nothing.*

Though I cannot help observing here, that her vindictive spirit appears plainly not to have yet subsided, but only taken a different course, by the latter part of her speech; for she continues still to accumulate her charges against him, as if only by way of enumerating the articles of her forgiveness.

* * *

Our Author, who almost every where manifests a perfect knowledge in the anatomy of the human mind, proves his science more particularly in a passage of this Scene, by shewing a property in our natures which might have escaped any common dissector of morals; and this is, our suffering, upon true penitence and contrition, not only all reproach thrown out against us with meekness and submission, but even encouraging and augmenting the abuse, by joining in our own condemnation. This may possibly arise from a strong wish, or sanguine hope, that such a voluntary penance may in part be accepted, both by heaven and the world, as some sort of atonement for our crimes.

Leontes, while Paulina is arraigning him with the utmost virulence and severity, instead of having her cast out from his presence, cries,

Go on, go on—

Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved
 All tongues to talk their bitterest.

Again,

Again, when she seems to relent of her severity towards him,

Thou did'st say but well,
When most the truth ; which I receive much better
Than to be pitied of thee. Prithee, bring me
To the dead bodies of my queen and son :
One grave shall be for both. Upon them shall
The causes of their deaths appear, unto
Our shame perpetual ; once a day I'll visit
The chapel where they lie, and tears shed there
Shall be my recreation. So long as nature
Will bear up with this exercise,
So long I daily vow to use it. Come,
And lead me to these sorrows.

* * *

In the First Scene of the Fifth Act, the same subject is renewed, where Leontes manifests the same humiliation and contrition for his crime, that he did before : but as an interval of sixteen years, spent in sorrow and repentance, had passed between these two æras, he, as would be natural then, shews an uneasiness at the reproach, and intreats to be relieved from it for the future ; but this in a manner so gentle and submissive, as none but Shakespeare himself could have conceived. The whole passage is worthy of being quoted.

Leontes, Cleomines, and Paulina.

Cleomines. Sir, you have done enough, and have performed
A faint-like sorrow : no fault you could make,
Which you have not redeemed indeed ; paid down
More penitence, than done trespass. At the last,
Do as the Heavens have done, forget your evil ;
With them, forgive yourself.

Leontes. Whilst I remember
Her and her virtues, I cannot forget
My blemishes in them, and so still think of
The wrong I did myself ; which was so much,
That heirless it hath made my kingdom ; and
Destroyed the sweet'st companion that e'er man
Bred his hopes out of.

Paulina. True, too true, my lord ;
If one by one you wedded all the world,
Or, from the All that are, took something good,

To

To make a perfect woman ; *she, you killed,*
Would be unparalleled.

Leontes. I think so. Killed ?

Killed ? *She* I killed ? I did so—But thou strik'st me
Sorely, to say I did—It is as bitter
Upon thy tongue, as in my thought. *Now, good now,*
Say so but seldom.

ACT IV. SCENE IV.

There is a poetical history of love given here, which closes with a beautiful description of a chaste and pure passion in a lover.

Florizel. The gods themselves,

Humbling their deities to love, have taken
The shapes of beasts upon them. Jupiter
Became a bull, and bellowed ; the green Neptune
A ram, and bleated ; and the fire-robed god,
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,
As I seem now. Their transformations
Were never for a piece of beauty rarer,
Nor in a way so chaste ; *since my desires*
Run not before mine honour, nor my lusts
Burn hotter than my faith.

SCENE V.

Here is a passage that I am particularly fond of, because it vindicates the rights of Nature, even over those arts which seem to vie and co-operate with her ; for her *general laws* can never be controlled but by *bye ones* of her own making.

Perdita and Polixenes.

Perdita. The fairest flowers o' th' season
Are our carnations, and streaked gilly-flowers,
Which some call Nature's bastards ; of that kind
Our rustic garden's barren, and I care not
To get slips of them.

Polixenes. And wherefore, gentle maiden,
Do you neglect them ?

Perdita. For I have heard it said,
There is an art, which in their piedness shares
With great creating Nature*.

* I have been told that different coloured silk threads, inserted in the roots, would have this effect.

Polixenes.

Polixenes. Say there be,
 Yet Nature is made better by no mean,
But Nature makes that mean ; so over that art
 Which, you say, adds to Nature, *is an art,*
That Nature makes ; you see, sweet maid, we marry
 A gentler scyon to the wildest stock,
 And make conceive a bark of baser kind
 By bud of nobler race. This is an art,
 Which does mend Nature—*change it, rather—but*
The art itself is nature.

Perdita. So it is.

Polixenes. Then make your garden rich in gilly-flowers,
 And do not call them bastards.

Perdita. *I'll not put*
The dibble † in earth, to set one slip of them ;
No more than were I painted, I would wish
This † youth should say, 'twere well ; and only, therefore,
Desire to breed by me.

I have continued the above dialogue beyond the philosophy of its subject, in order to treat my reader with one of the most refined sentiments of a chaste and delicate mind, that can possibly be conceived. Perdita shews a charming genuineness of nature in her latter speech ; for though she confesses the truth of Polixenes' position, yet is she so jealous of the honour of our great parent, that even the appearance of a violation against her rights offends her. And the parallel she makes upon the occasion, is beautiful. Readers see not half the *greatness* of Shakespeare, who overlook his *minutiae*.

In the same scene, the praise that Florizel bestows on Perdita is equally fond and beautiful.

What you do,
 Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,
 I'd have you do it ever ; when you sing,
 I'd have you buy and sell so ; so give alms ;
 Pray so ; and for the ord'ring your affairs,
 To sing them too. When you do dance, I wish you
 A wave o' th' sea, that you might ever do
 Nothing but that ; move still, still so,
 And own no other function. Each your doing,
 So singular in each particular,
 Crowns what your doing in the present deeds,
 'That all your acts are queens.

† *A setting stick.*

‡ *Florizel standing by.*

To which she replies, with very good sense and prudence,

O *Doricles*,
Your praises are too large ; but that your youth,
And the true blood which peeps forth fairly through it,
Do plainly give you out an unstained shepherd,
With wisdom I might fear, my *Doricles*,
You woo'd me the false way.

In answer to this, he says,

I think you have
As little skill to fear *, as I have purpose
To put you to't.

This is the true character of youth in the different sexes : Sincerity on one side, and confidence on the other. Deceit and diffidence are the fruits of *riper*, or more *rotten*, years.

S C E N E IX.

There is a reflection made here, which, if true, would be one of the heaviest articles of affliction.

Camillo and Perdita.

Camillo. Prosperity's the very bond of love,
Whose fresh complexion, and whose heart together,
Affliction alters.

But I shall rather hope and believe, with the charming *Perdita*, in the faith and fidelity she expresses in her reply :

One of these is true :
I think affliction *may subdue the cheek,*
But not take in the mind.

S C E N E XI.

There is a good ridicule, here, on the affectations of persons of rank, in the description of the manners by which the vulgar often distinguish their *betters*—perhaps their *superiors* only.

The old shepherd and his son, upon seeing *Autolycus*, the sharper, dressed up in a suit of the prince's cloaths, debate thus about him :

Son. This cannot be but a great courtier.

Shepherd. His garments are rich, but he wears them not handsomely.

* *As little skill to fear—As little suspicion in your nature.*

Son. He seems to be the more noble, in being fantastical. A great man, I'll warrant: *I know by the picking of his teeth.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

There is a good remark made here, on the wrong timing of reproof, in the speech of Cleomines to Paulina, upon her rough treatment of Leontes, on the subject of his misfortunes, when she is dissuading him from marrying.

You might have spoke a thousand things, that would
Have done the time more benefit, and graced
Your kindness better.

SCENE V.

This Comedy is full of well-described character, and beautiful description; but these not happening to fall within the scope I had prescribed to myself in this work, I have reluctantly passed them by, without noting. However, there is one passage among them, which luckily affords me a proper subject of remark, in the account given of Leontes and Camillo, on their being certified of the preservation of Perdita.

Autolicus and a Gentleman.

Autolicus. Beseech you, Sir, were you present at this relation?

Gentleman. I was by at the opening of the fardel, and heard the old shepherd deliver the manner how he found it; whereupon, after a little amazedness, we were all commanded out of the chamber. Only this, methought I heard the shepherd say, he found the child.

Autolicus. I would most gladly know the issue of it.

Gentleman. I make a broken delivery of the business; but the changes I perceived in the king and Camillo, were very notes of admiration; they seemed almost, with staring on one another, to tear the cases of their eyes. There was a speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture; they looked, as they had heard of a world *ransomed, or one destroyed*; a notable passion of wonder appeared in them; but the wisest beholder, that knew no more but seeing, could not say if the importance were joy or sorrow; but in the extremity of the one, it must needs be.

This description not only contains the beautiful and the sublime, but rises to a still higher sublimity, or, to speak in the stile of the Psalmist, to the *most highest*,

bighest, in the allusion to sacred writ, relating to the two principal articles in the Old and New Testament, the fall of man, and his redemption. Shakspeare makes frequent references to the sacred text, and writes often, not only as a moralist, but as a divine.

* * *

Autolicus having by accident had some hand in bringing about the discovery of Perdita, which was a circumstance that might have been sufficient to make another man's fortune, makes only this sad soliloquy upon the occasion :

Now, had I not the dash of my former life in me, would preferment drop on my head. I brought the old man and his son aboard the Prince ; told him I heard them talk of a fardel, and I know not what ; but he at that time over-sond of the shepherd's daughter, so he then took her to be, who began to be much sea-sick, and himself little better, extremity of weather continuing, this mystery remained undiscovered. *But 'tis all one to me ; for had I been the finder out of this secret, it would not have relished, among my other discredits.*

That *honesty is the best policy*, is a homely proverb ; but this only the more vouches the truth of it, by its having stood the test of all experience. Character is the *immediate jewel of the soul*, not only in its own worth, but even in the temporal advantages which frequently accrue from it. Lost health may be repaired, lost fortune be regained, even lost senses may be recovered ; but a forfeited character is rarely ever to be retrieved.

This is a theme which cannot be too largely or too frequently expatiated upon ; which I hope will serve as my apology for having taken the hint from so mean and trifling an instance as the foregoing.

S C E N E VI.

The old shepherd and his son having by the medium of the princess Perdita obtained into favour at Court, Autolicus asks forgiveness of the Clown for the tricks he had played him.

I humbly beseech you, Sir, to pardon me all the faults I have committed to your worship, and to give me your good report to the prince my master.

This request is seconded by the old man, in words which describe the proper character of that rank of life to which he had been just elevated.

Shepherd. Prithee, son, do ; *for we must be gentle, now we are gentlemen.*

But 'tis pity that the conduct and behaviour of too many, in so respectable a class, should afford cause for the severe sarcasm couched in the following words of the son :

Clown. Give me thy hand [*to Autolycus*].—I will *swear* to the prince thou art as honest a true fellow as any is in Bohemia.

Shepherd. You may *say* it, but not *swear* it.

Clown. *Not swear it, now I am a gentleman ?* Let boors and franklins * *say* it, I'll *swear* it.

Shepherd. How if it be false, son ?

Clown. *If it be ne'er so false, a true gentleman may swear it, on the behalf of his friend.*

SCENE VII.

Paulina says to Leontes, on perceiving him to be strongly affected on seeing Hermione represented so much to the life, as a supposed statue :

I'm sorry, Sir, I have thus far stirred you ; but I could afflict you further.

To which he replies :

Do, Paulina.

For this affliction has a taste as sweet

As any cordial comfort.

This is spoken with a true sense of a propitiatory and a contrite grief. A sincere repentance is, indeed, an healing balm to the wounded conscience ; a *cerebral comfort* to the soul.

* *Yeomen.*

TWELFTH NIGHT:

O R,

WHAT YOU WILL.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

DUKE of Illyria.

SEBASTIAN, brother to Viola.

ANTONIO, friend to Sebastian.

VALENTINE, an attendant on the Duke.

CLOWN, servant to Olivia.

W O M E N.

OLIVIA, beloved by the Duke.

VIOLA, in love with the Duke.

Twelfth Night : or, What You Will.

ACT I. SCENE I.

THIS Play opens with a sweet passage, in which the charms of music, and the nature of love, are beautifully described.

Duke. If music be the food of love, play on ;
 Give me excess of it ; that, surfeiting,
 The appetite may sicken, and so die.
 That strain again—It had a dying fall—
 O ! it came o'er my ear, like the sweet south,
 That breathes upon a bank of violets,
 Stealing and giving odour. Enough ! no more—
 'Tis not so sweet now, as it was before.
 O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou !
 That, notwithstanding thy capacity
 Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
 Of what validity and pitch so'er,
 But falls into abatement and low price,
 Even in a minute ; so full of shapes in fancy,
 That it alone is *hight* * fantastical.

As I have hitherto observed upon Shakespeare's critical knowledge in human nature, I hope it will not appear invidious now, if I should here remark upon his deficiency in a passage above—lines second and third. The duke is there made to wish his passion were extinct ; which, I believe, the most unhappy lover never yet did. We wish to remove every uneasy sensation it afflicts us with, by any means whatever ; sometimes even by death itself ; but never by the extinction of the affection.

This is not peculiar to love alone ; 'tis the same in all the tender feelings. We wish the object of our grief brought back again to life, but desire not to forget our sorrow. We wish to relieve the subjects of our pity, but would not be deprived of our com-

* *Hight*, yeaped, or called, instead of *high*. *Warton*.

passion. Heaven hath so framed us, and Heaven be praised for having endow'd and adorn'd us with such *sweet compunctious visitings of Nature!* 'tis in these features only that we can resemble our Maker. In the more heroic qualities of bravery and fortitude, can be traced no likeness of the Deity, because superfluous in a perfect state. The subject of love is touch'd upon again, twice, in the same Scene :

Duke. O, when my eyes did see Olivia first,
Mothought she purged the air of pestilence ;
 That instant was I turn'd into a hart,
 And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
 E'er since pursue me *.

And when Valentine acquaints the Duke with Olivia's vow of sequestering herself from the world, for seven years, to mourn the death of her brother, he cries out in an extasy,

O, she that hath an heart of that fine frame,
 To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
 How will she love, when the rich golden shaft
 Hath killed the flock of all affections else,
 That live in her ? When liver, brain, and heart,
 Three sovereign thrones, are all supplied and fill'd
 (O sweet perfection !) with one self-same king !

I am happy that this latter passage happens to occur so immediately after my remark above, as it affords me an opportunity of doing justice to Shakespeare, by observing that his inference, from Olivia's grief, to the nature of her heart in love, shews a perfect knowledge in this species of philosophy. The passions are divided into but two classes, the tender and the violent ; and any one of either affords an earnest of all others of the same kind.

His distinction, too, of the *three thrones*, the *liver*, *brain*, and *heart*, is admirable. These are truly the seats of the three chief affections of love ; the heart for passion, the mind for esteem, and the liver for jealousy ; if Horace's anatomy is to be credited †.

* A fine allusion to the story of Acteon, and a beautiful exposition of the fable.

† *Difficili bile tumet jecur.*

SCENE XI.

In the last speech of this Act, Olivia speaks in the usual manner of all infatuated persons, who are apt to make the Fates answerable for those follies or vices which they have not sense or virtue enough to extricate themselves from, by their own exertions. For, upon a consciousness of having too weakly betrayed her passion for Viola, appearing under the character of a cavalier, she acquiesces in her indiscretion, by saying,

I do I know not what—and fear to find
 Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind *.
Fate, shew thy force, ourselves we do not owe || ;
What is decreed must be—and this be so !

She repeats the same idle apology for herself, again, in the second Scene of the next Act :

For such as we are made, if such we be,
Alas ! our frailty is the cause, not we.

ACT II. SCENE VI.

There are some good rules and reflections here, upon that principal and interesting event of life, our marriage, which are well worth attending to ; as the natural consequences of an improper assortment, in that state, have been too strongly marked by the general experience of the world.

Duke, and Viola as a Man.

Duke. Let still the woman take
 An elder than herself, so wears she to him,
 So sways she level in her husband's heart.
 For, boy, however we do prize ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and won,
Than women's are.

Viola. I think it well, my lord.

* That my eye has revealed a secret, which my mind should have concealed.
Johnson.

|| For own, or are masters of.

Duke.

Duke. Then let thy love be younger than thyself,
Or thy affection cannot hold the bent ;
For women are as roses, whose fair flower,
Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour.

Viola. And so they are — Alas, that they are so —
To die, even when they to perfection grow !

A C T I I I . S C E N E I .

There is a slight stroke thrown out here, against an affected refinement on common speech ; which however I shall lay hold of, as one should animadvert upon every species of pedantry, which is an incumbrance to literature, and casts a damp upon all free and liberal conversation.

Clown. My lady is within, Sir ; I will *construe* to her whence you came ; who you are, and what you would, is out of my *welkin*. I might say *element*, but the word is *overworn*.

S C E N E X I V .

There is a most delicate sensibility expressed by a person here, in his reproach to one whom, by a similitude of appearances, he had mistaken for a friend on whom he had formerly conferred obligations, which he seemed then to have forgotten.

Antonio and Viola..

Will you deny me, now ?
Is't possible that my deserts to you
Can lack persuasion ? *Do not tempt my misery,*
Lest that it make me so unsound a man,
As to upbraid you with those kindnesses
That I have done for you.

To which the innocent and mistaken Viola replies, with a becoming spirit of conscious virtue,

I hate ingratitude more in a man,
Than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness,
Or any taint of vice whose strong corruption
Inhabits our frail blood.

There is an antient adage, which says, that *the sin of ingratitude includes every vice* *. It renders us un-

* *Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dixeris.*

worthy of all the goods and enjoyments of life, even of our very existence ; for we owe them all to favour and benevolence. Religion and virtue are, therefore, but barely the acknowledging a debt, which must ever remain undischarged.

All the moral I have been able to extract from this Piece, concludes in this Scene, with a position which *it were devoutly to be wished* had as much truth in physics, as it has in philosophy : That the outward form is but the visible sign of the internal mind.

Antonio. Thou hast, Sebastian, done good feature shame—

In Nature, there's no blemish but the mind :
None can be called deformed, but the unkind.
Virtue is beauty ; but the beauteous evil
Are empty trunks, o'erflourished by the Devil.

I shall here give a quotation from a modern dramatic poem of distinguished merit, as the passage relates so immediately to the subject above last mentioned.

“ Beauty and virtue are the same ;
“ They differ only in the name.
“ What to the soul is pure and bright,
“ Is beauty in a moral light ;
“ And what to sense does charms convey,
“ Is beauty in the natural way.
“ Each from one source its essence draws,
“ And both conform to Nature's laws.”

SOCRATES.

THE
MERRY WIVES
OF
WINDSOR.

Dramatis Personæ,

M E N,

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

MR. FORD.

FENTON, in love with Anne Page.

W O M E N,

ANNE PAGE, in love with FENTON.

The Merry Wives of Windsor.

THIS is one of the best acting Comedies of Shakespeare, and is replete with character, humour, and incident; but supplies very little toward the purpose of this Work. However, whatever there is, has a right to class with the rest; so I shall proceed to take it in its course.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Upon Mrs. Page's reading Falstaff's Love-letter to her, she makes the following reflection:

What unweighed behaviour hath this Flemish drunkard pickt, i' th' Devil's name, out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner essay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company—What should I say to him? I was then frugal of my mirth."

And in the next Scene, on communicating this adventure to Mrs. Ford, she recurs to the same thought again.

Nay, I know not—It makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he knew some stain in me, that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

This is a very natural sentiment for a delicate mind to conceive, upon meeting with an affront of this sort; and 'tis extremely proper, upon all such occasions, to enter into such a self-examination, by way of inquiring what part of our own conduct, or *unweighed behaviour*, as she expresses it, might have encouraged the offence; and upon an impartial scrutiny we shall generally find, that 'tis more our indiscretion than our charms which prompts the attack.

SCENE IX.

To preserve a charity in censure, from a consciousness of our own frailties, is very properly recommended

commended nere, though spoken in a feigned character.

Ford to Falstaff.

I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfections; but, good Sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, *turn another into the register of your own*, that I may pass with a reproof the easier; sith you yourself know how easy it is to be an offender.

*

*

*

The vice and folly of unlawful love are well exposed by an excellent allusion, in the same Scene:

Falstaff. Of what quality was your love, then?

Ford. Like a fair house *built upon another man's ground*; so that I have lost my edifice, by mistaking the place where I have erected it.

A C T III. S C E N E XII.

Where Fenton tells Anne Page her father's objections to him for his son-in-law, he gives a just description and character of those spendthrift men of quality, who go into the City to look for wives to repair their broken fortunes.

He doth object, I am too great of birth;
And that my state being galled with my expence,
I seek to heal it only by his wealth.
Besides these, other bars he lays before me;
My riots past, my wild societies;
And tells me, 'tis a thing impossible
I should love thee, but as a property—

S C E N E XIII.

Anne Page lamenting her father's tyranny, in condemning her to marry a man she detested on account of his fortune, says,

O what a world of vile ill-favoured faults
Look handsome in *a thousand* * pounds a year!

A C T V. S C E N E IV.

There was something very pleasing and advantageous to morals in the antient superstition which

* I have made this alteration, to correspond with the different rates of the times.

supposed

supposed the actions of men to have been under the immediate cognizance of certain superior Beings, who used to distribute rewards and punishments on the instant.

Evans, personating the King of the Fairies :

Cricket, to Windsor's chimneys shalt thou leap ;
Where fires thou find'st unraked, and hearths unswept,
There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry.
Our radiant queen hates fluts, and flutefy.
Go you, and where you find a maid
That ere she sleep hath thrice her prayers said,
Rein up the organs of her fantasy ;
Sleep she as sound as careless infancy ;
But those that sleep, and think not on their sins,
Pinch them, arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides, and shins,

The metaphorical exposition of this fable, is, I believe, and kindly hope too, most fully experienced by the difference of slumbers between an approving and an upbraiding mind. An evil conscience is a *sbrew*, and gives most shocking *curtain lectures*.

S C E N E V.

There is a very good reflection made here, upon the nature of fear or guilt being apt to confound our reason and senses, so as to lead us to mistake appearances for realities,

Falstaff, upon the mockery of the Fairies being discovered to him, says,

And these are not Fairies ? I was three or four times in the thought they were not Fairies ; and yet *the guiltiness of my mind, with the sudden surprise of my powers, arove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief, in despite of the teeth of all rhyme and reason, that they were Fairies. See now, how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment !*

T H E

T A M I N G

O F T H E

S H R E W.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

VINCENTIO, Father of Lucentio.

LUCENTIO, in love with Bianca.

PETRUCHIO, a suitor to Catharine.

HORTENSIO, } Rivals, in love with Bianca.
GREMIO, }

TRANIO, servant to Lucentio.

W O M E N.

CATHARINE, a shrew.

BIANCA, her sister.

Milliner.

Mantua-maker.

The Taming of the Shrew.

AS the business of this Play, declared by the title of it, is, I fear, a work rather of *discipline* than of *precept*, we are to expect but few helps from it toward the enrichment of this collection. There are as many receipts for effecting this purpose, as there are prescriptions for a tooth-ach; and for the same reason, because none of them answer the end, but the getting rid of it; for the old proverb still stands bluff against all such documents, that *Every man can cure a scold, but he who has her.*

THE INTRODUCTION.

S C E N E III.

Among the preparations which are making, in order to deceive the drunken Tinker into the notion of his having been a mad Lord just recovering his senses, some Strollers are introduced to perform a Play for his entertainment; and the Actors meaning to exhibit one of the old religious Farces, stiled the *Mysteries*, upon enumerating the *properties* necessary toward the representation, ask for “a little *vinegar* “to make their Devil roar.” Upon which passage Dr. Warburton gives the following note:

“When the acting the *Mysteries* of the Old and
 “New Testament was in vogue, at the representation
 “of the *Mystery* of the *Passion*, Judas and the Devil
 “made a part. And the Devil, wherever he came,
 “was always to suffer some disgrace, to make the
 “people laugh; as here the buffoonery was to apply
 “the *gall and vinegar*, to make him roar. And the
 “*Passion* being that, of all the *Mysteries*, which was
 “most frequently represented, *vinegar* became at
 “length the standing implement to torment the
 “Devil,

“ Devil, and used for this purpose even after the
 “ *Mysteries* ceased, and the *Moralities* * came in vogue ;
 “ where the Devil still continued to bear a consider-
 “ able part. The mention of it here, was designed
 “ to ridicule so absurd a circumstance in these old
 “ Farces.”

The giving such theatrical representations of Sacred Writ, was rather something more than barely *absurd* ; it was extremely profane : but the device of tormenting the Devil with *gall and vinegar*, had a mystic conceit in it ; being certainly intended by the authors of these exhibitions, as an allusion to a circumstance in the *Passion*, mentioned by St. Matthew, where he says, *they gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall*. Chap. xxvii. ver. 34. And as the sufferings on the *Cross* were undergone for our *redemption from sin*, the priests, who were the contrivers of this strange and improper species of drama, might have intended this particular to shew the distress of the Devil upon that occasion.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The proper use and choice of travel and study, of such sort of travel and study as rendered so many men eminent among the Antients, are well treated of here.

Lucentio and Tranio.

Lucentio. Tranio, since for the great desire I had
 To see fair Padua, *nursery of arts*,
 I am arrived in fruitful Lombardy,
 The pleasant garden of great Italy ;
 And by my father's love and leave, am armed
 With his good will, and thy good company :
 Most trusty servant, well approved in all,
 Here let us breathe, and haply institute
 A course of learning, and *ingenuous* † studies.
 Pisa, renowned for grave citizens,

* Certain allegorical pieces, where the Virtues and Vices were personified, which succeeded to the stage, upon the prohibition of the former.

† Instead of *ingenious*. Doctor Johnson. The context of the speech vouches the propriety of the alteration.

Gave me my being ; and my father first,
 A merchant of great traffic thro' the world—
 Vincentio's come of the Bentivoli,
 Lucentio his son, brought up in Florence,
 It shall become to serve all hopes conceived,
To deck his fortune with his virgious deeds—
 And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study,
Virtue, and that part of philosophy
Will I apply, that treats of happiness
By virtue specially to be achieved.
 Tell me thy mind, for I have Pisa left,
 And am to Padua come, as he that leaves
 A shallow plash, to plunge him in the deep,
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.

The following reply adds a more liberal scope to the uses of study and travel :

Tranio. *Me pardonato,* gentle master mine,
 I am in all affected as yourself ;
 Glad that you thus continue your resolve,
 To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
 Only, good master, while we do admire
 This virtue, and this moral discipline,
 Let's be no *Stoics*, nor no *stoeks*, I pray,
 Or so devote to Aristotle's checks,
 As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured—
 Talk logic with acquaintance that you have,
 And practise rhetoric in your common talk ;
 Music and poetry use to quicken you ;
 The mathematics and the metaphysics,
 Fall to them as you find your stomach serves ;
No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en—
 In brief, Sir, study what you most affect.

S C E N E III.

A truth is here spoken, which is too frequently evinced by the general practice of the self-interested, or, more properly speaking, *avaricious* world ; where Gremio and Hortensio are conferring together about providing a husband for Catharine, as the younger sister is not to be married till the elder is disposed of.

Gremio. Think'st thou, Hortensio, though her father be very rich, any man is so very a fool to be married to hell ?

Hortensio. Tush, Gremio ; though it pass your patience and mine to endure her loud alarms, why, man, there be good fellows

in the world, an a man could light on them, *would take her with all her faults, and money enough.*

S C E N E IV.

Love conceived at first sight, is the subject of most Romances ; and the philosophy of these Northern climes looks for it only there ; but if we consult the volume of Nature more at large, we shall find that such extempore passions are not infrequent in the more Southern regions of the world : and the clear and warm air of Italy communicates a brisker motion to the heart and spirits, than our natural phlegm can possibly be sensible of.

Tranio, upon perceiving the emotion of Lucentio, on his first view of Bianca, says to him,

I pray you, Sir, tell me, is it possible
That love should on a sudden take such hold ?

Lucentio. O, Tranio, till I found it to be true,
I never thought it possible, or likely.
But see, while idly I stood looking on,
I found the effect of *love in idleness* ;
And now in plainness do confess to thee,
That art to me as secret, and as dear,
As *Ana* to the queen of *Carthage* was,
Tranio, I burn, I pine, I perish, *Tranio*,
If I achieve not this young modest girl.
Counsel me, *Tranio*, for I know thou canst ;
Assist me, *Tranio*, for I know thou wilt.

Tranio replies, very judiciously,

Master, it is no time to chide you now ;
Affection is not *rated* * from the heart ;
If love hath *toiled* † you, nought remains but so,
Redime te captum, quàm queas minimo ‡.

A C T II. S C E N E II.

Mildness opposed to violence, with regard to their different effects upon the passions and affections of the mind, is justly illustrated here, by the following simile :

Petruchio. Though little fire grows great with little wind,
Yet extreme gusts will blow out fire and all.

* *Rated*, to be chid or counselled away.

† *Toiled*, *ensnared*, instead of *touched*. Warburton.

‡ Get out of the net as well as you can. *Terence*.

ACT IV. SCENE VIII.

Among the various methods that Petruchio makes use of, after his marriage with Catharine, to tame her spirit, the following passage presents us with one, which the satirists of our sex will be apt to say was a severe test of female temper.

Catharine, Petruchio, Milliner, and Mantua-maker.

Milliner. Here is the cap your worship did bespeak.

Petruchio. Why, this was moulded on a porringer,
A velvet dish; fy, fy, 'tis lewd and filthy—
Why, 'tis a cockle, or a walnut shell,
A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap.
Away with it; come, let me have a bigger.

Catharine. I'll have no bigger, this doth fit the time *;
And *gentlewomen* wear such caps as these.

Petruchio. When you are *gentle*, you shall have one too,
And not till then.

Catharine. Why, Sir, I trust I may have leave to speak,
And speak I will. I am no child, no babe.
Your betters have endured me say my mind;
And if you cannot, best you stop your ears—
My tongue will tell the anger of my heart,
Or else my heart, concealing it, will break;
And rather than it shall, I will be free,
Even to the utmost, as I please, in words.

Petruchio. Why, thou say'st true, it is a paltry cap,
A custard coffin, a bauble, a filken pie;
I love thee well in that thou lik'st it not.

Catharine. Love me, or love me not, I like the cap;
And I will have it, or I will have none.

Petruchio. The gown—why, ay—Come, taylor, let us see't—
O mercy, Heaven, what masking stuff is here?
What? this a sleeve? 'tis like a demi-cannon—
What ups and downs, carved like an apple-tart?
Here's snip, and snip, and slish, and slash,
Like to a censer in a barber's shop—
Why, what a devil's name, taylor, call'st thou this?

Mantua-maker. You bid me make it orderly and well,
According to the fashion of the time.

Catharine. I never saw a better fashioned gown,
More quaint, more pleasing, nor more commendable—
Belike you mean to make a puppet of me.

* *Is fashionable.*

Upon this passage, Doctor Warburton has passed the following stricture :

“ Shakespeare has here copied Nature with great
 “ skill. Petruchio, by frightening, starving, and
 “ over-watching his wife, had tamed her into gentleness and submission ; and the audience expects
 “ to hear no more of the shrew ; when, on her being
 “ crossed in the article of fashion and finery, the
 “ most inveterate folly of the sex, she flies out
 “ again, though for the last time, into all the intemperate rage of her character.”

This is being severe on our sex at a very cheap rate, indeed; foibles, passions, and inconsiderable attachments, are equally common to all mankind, without distinction of gender ; and the difference of objects gives no sort of advantage to men, over us ; as all eager pursuits, except those of virtue, are alike ridiculous and unimportant, in the candid and impartial estimation of reason and philosophy :

“ Another Florio doating on a flower.” YOUNG.

Petruchio having gained a conquest in this material point, proceeds to dress her and himself in poor attire, and proposes that they should go pay a visit to her family in such mean garments ; upon which occasion he expresses a sentiment so just in itself, that it betrays a sad corruption in the morals of mankind, that experience cannot support it.

Petruchio. Well, come, my Kate, we will unto your father's
 Even in these honest mean habiliments ;
 Our purses shall be proud, our garments poor ;
 For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich ;
 And, as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
 So honour peereth in the meanest habit.
 What ! is the jay more precious than the lark,
 Because his feathers are more beautiful ?
 Or is the adder better than the eel,
 Because his painted skin contents the eye ?
 Oh, no, good Kate ; neither art thou the worse
 For this poor furniture, and mean array.

A C T V. S C E N E V.

After Catharine has been thoroughly reclaimed, she takes an occasion, from a circumstance in the Play, of reproving another married woman, in an admirable speech; wherein the description of a wayward wife, with the duty and submission which ought to be shewn to a husband, are finely set forth.

Fy! fy! unknit that threatening unkind brow,
 And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,
 To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.
 It blots thy beauty, as frosts bite the meads;
 Confounds thy fame, as whirlwinds shake fair buds,
 And in no sense is meet or amiable.
 A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,
 Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;
 And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
 Will deign to sip, or touch one drop of it.
 Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
 Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
 And for thy maintenance commits his body
 To painful labour, both by sea and land;
 To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
 While thou lyest warm at home, secure and safe;
 And craves no other tribute at thy hands,
 But love, fair looks, and true obedience;
 Too little payment for so great a debt.
 Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
 Even such a woman oweth to her husband;
 And when she's froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
 And not obedient to his honest will,
 What is she but a foul contending rebel,
 And graceless traitor, to her loving lord?
 I am ashamed that women are so simple,
 To offer war, where they should kneel for peace;
 Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway,
 When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.
 Why are our bodies soft, and weak, and smooth,
 Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,
 But that our soft conditions and our hearts
 Should well agree with our external parts?
 Come, come, you froward and unable worms,
 My mind has been as big as one of yours,
 My heart as great, my reason haply more,
 'To bandy word for word, and frown for frown;
 But now I see our lances are but straws,

Our

Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare ;
That seeming to be most, which we indeed least are.

I have stopped short here, as thinking that the following lines might have marred the whole beauty of the speech ; the doctrine of *passive obedience and non-resistance* in the state of marriage, being there carried, perhaps, rather a little too far. But I shall quote them here, as they afford me an opportunity of remarking on the nature of too prompt reformees, who are apt to run into the very contrary extreme, at once ; betraying more of the *time-server*, than the *convert*.

But, in general, indeed, it has been observed, that the most haughty tyrants become, on a reverse of fortune, the most abject slaves ; and this from a like principle, in both cases ; that they are apt to impute the same spirit of despotism to the conqueror, they were before impressed with themselves ; and consequently, are brought to tremble at the apprehension of their own vice.

The lines I allude to, are these :

Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands beneath your husband's foot ;
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

* *To vail* is to submit, to be awed by authority.

T H E

C O M E D Y

O F

E R R O R S.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

ANTIPHOLIS.

BALTHAZAR.

W O M E N.

An Abbess.

ADRIANA, wife to Antipholis.

LUCIANA, her Sister.

T H E

COMEDY of ERRORS.

A C T II. SCENE I.

THE first passage that I find worthy of being noted, in this Play, happens to be a repetition of the same moral which concluded my remarks on the last piece; but as this hint cannot be too often repeated, I shall supply the quotation, though it may be needless to make any further observations upon the subject.

Adriana and Luciana.

Adriana. Neither my husband, nor the slave returned.
That in such haste I sent to seek his master!
Sure, Luciana, it is two o'clock.

Luciana. Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,
And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.
Good sister, let us dine; and never fret,
A man is master of his liberty—
Time is their master, and when they see time,
They'll go or come. If so, be patient, sister.

Adriana. Why should their liberty than ours be more?

Luciana. Because their business still lies out a-door.

Adriana. Look, when I serve him so, he takes it ill.

Luciana. O know, he is the bridle of your will.

Adriana. There's none but asses will be bridled so.

Luciana. Why, *head-strong liberty is lashed with woe.*
There's nothing situate under heaven's eye,
But hath its bound, on earth, in sea, or sky:
The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls,
Are their male's subjects, and at their controuls:
Man, more divine, the master of all these,
Lord of the wide world, and wide watery seas,
Indued with intellectual sense and soul,
Of more pre-eminence than fish or fowl,
Are masters to their females, and their lords:
Then let your will attend on their accords.

Adriana.

Adriana. This servitude makes you to keep un-wed.

Luciana. Not this, but troubles of the marriage-bed.

Adriana. But were you wedded, you would bear some sway?

Luciana. Ere I learn love, I'll practise to obey.

In the continuation of the same dialogue, where Luciana preaches patience to her sister, Adriana points out to her, very naturally, the great difference between giving and taking of advice.

Adriana. Patience unmoved!—No marvel tho' she pause *;
They can be meek, who have no other cause,
A wretched soul, bruised with adversity,
We bid be quiet, when we hear it cry;
But were we burdened with like weight of pain,
As much, or more, we should ourselves complain.
So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,
With urging helpless patience wouldst relieve me;
But if thou live to see like right bereft,
'This fool-begged † patience in thee will be left.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

In a passage here, there is a sentiment of great propriety and delicacy argued upon; in the dissuading a person from the commission of an unseemly action, even though the thing itself might be sufficiently justified in one's own breast. A respect to decency, and the opinion of the world, is an excellent bulwark to our virtues.

When Antipholis, upon being denied admittance into his house from a mistake in his wife and domestics, is in resentment preparing to force open the door, his friend intreats his forbearance in the following words:

Balthazar. Be ruled by me, depart in patience,
And let us to the Tyger I all to dinner;
And about evening come yourself alone,
To know the reason of this strange restraint,
If by strong hand you offer to break in,
Now in the stirring passage of the day,

* *Pause*—acquiesces, or submits. Johnson.

† Alluding to the Law term, of *begging the guardianship* of an Idiot—*Ditto*.

‡ A Tavern, so called from the sign.

A vulgar comment will be made of it ;
 And that supposed by the common rout *,
 Against your yet ungalled estimation,
 That may with foul intrusion enter in,
 And dwell upon your grave when you are dead :
 For slander lives upon succession,
 For ever housed where once it gets possession.

Prior speaks very refinedly on the same nice subject :

“ Beyond the fixed and settled rules
 “ Of vice and virtue, in the schools ;
 “ Above the letter of the law,
 “ Which holds our men and maids in awe ;
 “ The better sort should set before ’em
 “ A grace, a manner, a decorum ;
 “ Something that gives their acts a light,
 “ Makes them not only just, but bright ;
 “ And sets them in that open fame,
 “ Which witty malice cannot blame.”

ACT V. SCENE II.

There are some excellent documents for wives, laid down in this place, upon the following occasion :

Antipholis, in this *Comedy of Errors*, being supposed to be out of his senses, takes sanctuary in a Priory to screen himself from Adriana and her friends, who attempt to seize him ; and the Abbess, coming forth to forbid their entrance, first artfully draws a confession from Adriana of her manners and conduct toward her husband, upon her having conceived some jealousy of him ; and then proceeds to infer the cause of his distraction from her behaviour.

Abbess. Hath he not lost much wealth by wreck at sea ?
 Buried some dear friend ? Hath not else his eye
 Strayed his affection in unlawful love ?
 A sin prevailing much in youthful men,
 Who give their eyes the liberty of gazing.
 Which of these sorrows is he subject to ?

Adriana. To none of these, except it be the last ;
 Namely some love, that drew him oft from home.

* That is, the world will be apt to frame suppositions, &c.

Abbess. You should for that have reprehended him.

Adriana. Why, so I did.

Abbess. Ay, but not rough enough.

Adriana. As roughly as my modesty would let me.

Abbess. Haply, in private.

Adriana. And in assemblies too.

Abbess. Ay, but not enough.

Adriana. It was the copy of our conference ;

In bed, he slept not for my urging it ;

At board, he fed not for my urging it ;

Alone, it was the subject of my theme ;

In company, I often glanced at it ;

Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

Abbess. And therefore came it, that the man was mad—

The venom clamours of a jealous woman

Poison more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.

It seems his sleeps were hindered by thy railing ;

And therefore comes it that his head is light.

Thou say'st his meat was sauced with thy upbraidings ;

Unquiet meals make ill digestions ;

Therefore the raging fire of fever bred ;

And what's a fever, but a fit of madness ?

Thou say'st his sports were hindered by thy brawls—

Sweet recreation barred, what doth ensue,

But moody and dull melancholy,

Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair ?

And at its heels a huge infectious troop

Of pale distemperatures, and foes to life.

In food, in sport, and life preserving rest,

To be disturbed, would mad or man or beast.

The consequence is then, thy jealous fits

Have scared thy husband from the use of 's wits.

M U C H A D O
ABOUT NOTHING.

L 2

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

LEONATO, Governor of Messina.

ANTONIO, his brother.

DON PEDRO, Prince of Arragon.

CLAUDIO, his friend.

DON JOHN, bastard brother to Don Pedro.

CONRADE, his friend.

BENEDICK, a young lord, a marriage-hater.

A FRIAR.

A MESSENGER.

W O M E N.

HERO, daughter to Leonato.

BEATRICE, niece to Leonato.

Much Ado About Nothing.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Leonato and Messenger.

A Messenger from the camp telling Leonato of his having given an account of the gallant behaviour of Claudio to his uncle, says,

I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him—even so much, that joy could not shew itself *modest* enough, without a badge of *bitterness*.

Upon this passage Doctor Warburton has given a note so full and ingenious, that it would be presumption in me to offer my comment on it, in any other sense or words than his own.

“ This is judiciously expressed.—Of all the transports of joy, that which is attended with tears, is the least offensive ; because, carrying with it this mark of pain, it allays the envy that usually attends another’s happiness. This he finely calls a *modest* joy ; such a one as did not insult the observer, by an indication of happiness unmixed with pain.”

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Physiognomists say, that the features of the mind usually mark their impressions on the countenance. A mirthful or melancholy aspect, a wanton or malicious one ; in fine, every characteristic trait of visage throughout, denote their correspondent passions or affections in the soul. Socrates acknowledged the certainty of this science, by confessing a description of himself to be true, as to his nature, though false, regarding his character.

According to this piece of philosophy, a person of a severe and saturnine complexion is humorously described in this place.

Beatrice. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him, but I am heart-burned an hour after.

From hence this lively girl proceeds to draw a contrast between him and another person, of a contrary disposition, very justly censuring both of the extremes :

He were an excellent man that were made just in the mid-way between him and Benedick; the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the other, too much like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

S C E N E III.

The absolute dominion which love is found to usurp, not only over our passions, but our very principles, is too justly described in a passage here; which may lead one to pronounce, that neither man or woman can truly boast a friend, whom they have not had an occasion of first trying as a rival.

Claudio. Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the office and affairs of love;
Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues *,
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent. Beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood—
This is an accident † of hourly proof.

S C E N E V.

The effect of strong passion in the prevention of utterance, is well expressed here :

Claudio. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy—I were but little happy, if I could say how much.

S C E N E VIII.

The total metamorphosis of character, manners, and disposition, wrought in us by love, is well described in a speech in this Scene :

Benedick. I do much wonder, that one man seeing how much another man is a fool, when he dedicates his behaviour to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn, by falling himself in love! And such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him, but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor

* *Use their own tongues, for let use,*

† *Accident, for article.*

and the pipe. I have known when he would have walked ten miles a-foot, to see a good armour; and now will he lye ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man, and a soldier; and now is he turned orthographer; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes.

From these reflections, Benedick goes on holding a debate with himself upon this subject; and, like most people, before their hearts have become a party in the matter, draws a vain portrait of the peerless paragon who only can be capable of triumphing over his affections; leaving nothing, in the choice of his mistress, to Heaven itself, except *the colour of her hair*.

May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath, that till he have made one of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well. But till all graces meet in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician; *and her hair shall be of what colour it please God*.

SCENE IX.

Modesty is as sure an attendant on Merit, as its companion, as Envy is, as *its shade* *.

Pedro. It is the witness still of excellency,
To put a strange face on its own perfection.

In the same Scene, Don Pedro, speaking of Benedick, says,

The man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him, by some large jests he will make.

This is too common a character in life; of persons who scoff at religion with as much *fear and trembling*, as would be sufficient to *work out their salvation*. The whole of infidelity is owing to a fool-hardy dis-

* "Envy does merit as its *shade* pursue,
"And like its *shadow* proves the *substance* too." POPE.

position of this sort. The strongest Deists are but Sceptics; and the Atheist, no more than a Deist in reality; nay often, as Pope humorously expresses it on another occasion,

“ May be a *sad good Christian* in his heart.”

S C E N E X.

The scheme for inducing Bénédict and Beatrice to fall in love with each other, which is commenced with him in the preceding Scene, and concluded with her in the first one of the Third Act, is most admirably laid. The surest method that artifice can contrive to inspire a passion in any one, is by giving them a notion of the other party's predilection for them; for, as Hero says to Ursula, in the plot on Beatrice,

Let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be, how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice. *Of such matter*
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That often wounds by hearsay.

[Act III. Scene I.

And again,

If it prove so, then loving goes by haps;
Some Cupids kill with arrows, some with traps. [Ditto.

When every other circumstance of years, of rank, and fortune happens to be on a par, such arts may, perhaps, be allowed to pass under the title of *pious frauds*, at least; for gratitude is a good cement of affections, as it serves to confirm passion by principle.

* * *

The readiness with which we are apt to run into the snare ourselves, with the kind of logic we use in order to make a *sudden resolve* appear a *deliberate purpose*, may be seen displayed in the soliloquy of Benedick, just after Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato, had played off their part against him, as supposing him not to be within hearing.

Benedick

Benedick, advancing from the arbour,

This can be no trick, the conference was *sadly** borne. They have the truth of this, from Hero; they seem to pity the lady; it seems her affections have the full bent. Love me! Why, it must be requited—I hear how I am censured; they say, I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love to come from her; they say too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection.—I did never think to marry—I must not seem proud—happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness—And virtuous—'Tis so, I cannot reprove it—And wise—but for loving me—By my troth, it is no addition to her wit—nor no great argument of her folly, neither; for I will be horribly in love with her—I may chance to have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences, these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No—the world must be peopled—When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live 'till I were married. Here comes Beatrice! By this day, she's a fair lady—I do spy some marks of love in her.

The speech of Beatrice, also, in the first Scene of the Third Act, has a right to take place here, though somewhat before its time, as a *companion* to the preceding.

Beatrice, advancing, after Hero and Ursula had quitted the Scene :

What fire is in my ears! Can this be true?
Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on, I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand;
If thou dost love, thy fondness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band.
For others say thou dost deserve; and I
Believe it better than reportingly.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

A most unamiable character of pride and self-conceit is given in this place, which falls very pro-

* *Sadly*, for *gravely*, or *seriously*.

perly within the moral tendency of these notes to expose to view ; though it is only spoken in consequence of the plot against Beatrice.

Hero. But nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff, than that of Beatrice,
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprizing what they look on ; and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak ; she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-indeared.

The same character is continued in the same Scene, with the addition of a satirical vein, which is extremely well and humorously described :

Hero. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would spell him backward—If fair-faced,
She'd swear the gentleman should be her sister ;
If black, why Nature drawing of an *antick* *,
Made a foul blot ; if tall, a lance ill-headed ;
If low, an *aglet* † very vilely cut ;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds ;
If silent, then a block moved by none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out,
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

Hero, in the same Scene, pretending to lay a scheme with Ursula, for curing Benedick of his supposed passion for Beatrice, while she is listening, says,

No, rather I will go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion.
And, truly, I'll devise some honest flanders
To stain my cousin with—*One doth not know*
How such an ill word may impositon liking.

The success of such a wicked device I have already remarked on, in a passage of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act Third, and Scene Fifth.

“ The best way is to slander Valentine, &c.”

* A Harlequin.

† *Aglets* were little Images made use of as tags to be suspended at the points of the old fashioned laced cravats ; somewhat like those the Roman Catholics hang at the bottom of their *rosaries*.

and I shall, therefore, make no further note on the subject here.

I have not been so much an œconomist, in other places, where the recurring of similar topics afforded me opportunities of saving myself trouble, by references ; but this one is so very irksome a theme, that it disgusts me to dwell upon it for a moment ; for which reason, should I happen to meet with it again, in the course of this Work, I shall pass it by unnoticed for the future.

ACT IV. SCENE II.

Hero, being falsely accused of an act of dishonour, is examined before her father, her lover, and a Friar, with other friends, who had all met together in a convent to attend her nuptials ; and the bitterness of a parent's anguish and resentment on so trying an occasion, is most feelingly expressed in the following speech :

Leonato, to his daughter on her fainting.

Do not live, Hero, do not ope thy eyes ;
 For did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
 Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy flames,
 Myself would, on the rereward of reproaches,
 Strike at thy life. Grieved I, I had but one ?
 Chid I for that at frugal Nature's frame ?
 I've one too much by thee. Why had I one ?
 Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes ?
 Why had I not, with charitable hand,
 Ta'en up a beggar's issue at my gates ?
 Who smeared thus, and mired with infamy,
 I might have said, No part of it is mine ;
 This shame derives itself from unknown loins.
 But mine, and mine I loved, and mine I praised,
 And mine that I was proud of, mine so much,
 That I myself was to myself not mine,
 Valuing of her ; why she——O she is fallen
 Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
 Hath drops too few to wash her clean again ;
 And salt too little which may season give
 To her foul tainted flesh !

Upon

Upon this occasion, the good Friar, with that charity and humanity which so well become the sacred office of Priesthood, and from that observation which his long experience in the business of *auricular confession* had enabled him to form, stands forth an advocate for Hero's innocence, in the following poetical and philosophical oration :

Hear me, a little ;
 For I have only silent been so long,
 And given way into this course of fortune,
 By noting of the lady. I have marked
 A thousand blushing apparitions
 To start into her face ; a thousand innocent shames
 In angel whiteness bear away those blushes ;
 And in her eye there hath appeared a fire,
 To burn the errors that these princes † hold
 Against her maiden truth—Call me a fool,
 Trust not my reading, nor my observations,
 Which with experimental seal do warrant
 The tenor of my *book* ‡ ; trust not my age,
 My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
 If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here,
 Under some biting error.

But, a little after, this good casuist asks her suddenly this trying question :

Lady, what man is he you are accused of ?

Upon which passage Doctor Warburton makes the following judicious remark :

“ The Friar had just before boasted his great
 “ skill in sifting out the truth ; and indeed, he ap-
 “ pears, in this instance, to have been no fool. He
 “ was by, all the while at the accusation, and heard
 “ no names mentioned. Why, then, should he ask
 “ her what man she was accused of ? But in this
 “ lay the subtilty of his examination. For, had
 “ Hero been guilty, it was very probable that, in
 “ the hurry and confusion of spirits into which the
 “ terrible insult of her lover had thrown her, she

† Who were her accusers.

‡ I do not comprehend the meaning of this expression, unless it be allowed to be figurative of his art, science, or knowledge in physiognomy.

“ would

“ would never have observed that the man’s name
 “ was not mentioned ; and so, on this question,
 “ might have betrayed herself, by naming the per-
 “ son she was conscious of an affair with. The
 “ Friar observed this, and so concluded, that, were
 “ she guilty, she would probably have fallen into
 “ the trap he had laid for her. I only take notice
 “ of this, to shew how admirably well Shakespeare
 “ knew how to sustain his characters.”

But this noble defence for the unhappy Hero, not being sufficient to obviate the strong impressions of her guilt, which the father had conceived against her, the honest Priest then goes on to propose a scheme of conduct to him, which might peradventure bring about some crisis or event, that would clear her innocence ; at least silence the infamy, and remove her from being any longer an object of obloquy. In this proposal there is shewn a just knowledge of the world, and an intimate acquaintance with the secret movements of the human heart.

Friar. Pause, a while,

And let my counsel sway you in this case.

Your daughter here the princes left for dead * ;

Let her a time be secretly kept in,

And publish it that she is so, indeed :

Maintain a mourning ostentation,

And on your family’s old monument

Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites

That appertain unto a burial.

Leonato. What shall become of this ? What will this do ?

Friar. Marry, this well carried, shall on her behalf

Change slander to remorse ; that is some good :

But not for that I dream on this strange course,

But on this travail look for greater birth :

She dying, as it must be so maintained,

Upon the instant that she was accused,

Shall be lamented, pitied, and excused,

Of every hearer : for it so falls out,

That what we have, we prize not to the worth,

* On her fainting.

Whiles we enjoy it ; but being lacked and lost,
 Why then we reckon the value ; then we find
 The virtue that possession would not shew us,
 Whilst it was ours ; so shall it fare with Claudio :
 When he shall hear she died upon his words,
 The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
 Into his study of imagination,
 And every lovely organ of her life
 Shall come apparelled in more precious habit ;
 More moving, delicate, and full of life,
 Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
 Than when she lived indeed. Then shall he mourn,
 If ever love had interest in his liver,
 And wish he had not so accused her ;
 No, though he thought his accusation true.
 Let this be so, and doubt not but success
 Will fashion the event in better shape
 Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
 But if all aim but this be levelled false,
 The supposition of the lady's death
 Will quench the wonder of her infamy.
 And if it sort not well, you may conceal her,
 As best befits her wounded reputation,
 In some reclusive and religious life,
 Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

To this innocent deception the father at length
 consents, expressing himself, at the same time, in a
 manner that every person's experience, who has ever
 had the misfortune to have been in such situations,
 must have felt the justness of.

*Leonato. Being that I flow in grief,
 The smallest twine may lead me.*

Doctor Johnson's note upon this passage, is
 worthy of being quoted here :

" This is one of our Author's observations upon
 " life. Men overpowered with distress, eagerly
 " listen to the first offers of relief, close with every
 " scheme, and believe every promise. He that has
 " no longer any confidence in himself, is glad to
 " repose his trust in any other that will undertake
 " to guide him."

SCENE

S C E N E III.

Beatrice, in spiriting up Benedick to avenge her cousin Hero's quarrel, thus expresses her resentment against the offender :

Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slander'd, scorn'd, dishonour'd my kinswoman! O, that I were a man! What! bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then with public accusation, uncover'd slander, unmitigated rancour—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place. O that I were a man for his sake! or, that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too—He is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and swears to it—I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

There is a generous warmth of indignation in this speech, which must certainly impress a female reader with the same sentiments upon such an occasion. I am not so disingenuous to take advantage of this passage as an historical fact, but am willing to rest it upon the sole authority of the Poet's assumption, as this will sufficiently answer the design of my introducing it; which is, to vindicate my sex from the general, but unjust charge of being prone to slander; for were this the case, were not the resentment of Beatrice, in this instance, natural, how could it move our sympathy? which it actually does here, even though we acknowledge the circumstance to have been merely imaginary.

I believe, that there is nothing which a woman of virtue feels herself more offended at, than defamation or scandal; first against her own character, and proportionably when others are made the victims. There are women, indeed, who may be fond of slander, as having an interest in depreciating an idea of chastity; but this is owing to their frailty, not their sex—Vice is neither masculine, nor feminine; *'tis the common of two.*

A C T V. S C E N E I.

While the above-mentioned experiment was depending, and before the honour of Hero had been cleared, Antonio, her uncle, endeavours to comfort his brother under this misfortune; who replies to him in a manner very natural for a person labouring under the immediate pressure of affliction, to speak to all advisers who do not suffer the same portion of grief themselves.

Leonato. I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve—Give me not counsel,
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear,
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so loved his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelmed like mine,
And bid him speak of patience;—
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain;
And thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form;
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard,
Cry, Sorrow, wag! and hem, when he should groan;
Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man; for, brother, men
Can counsel, and give comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptual medicine to rage;
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread;
Charm ach with air, and agony with words.
No, no—'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;
But no man's virtue, or sufficiency,
To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself—therefore, give me no counsel;
My griefs cry louder than *advertisement* *.

Antonio. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leonato. I prithee, peace; I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher,

* *Advertisement*, for *admonition*.

That could endure the tooth-ach patiently ;
 However they have writ the stile of Gods,
 And made a pish at chance and sufferance.

S C E N E II.

Upon the two brothers meeting Claudio soon after, the father challenges him to single combat, for the scandal he had thrown upon his daughter's fame ; which being passed off in a sort of contemptuous manner, the resentment of the younger brother is roused, and he immediately steps between and takes the quarrel upon himself, retorting the affront by a just description of the bragging profligates of those, or, indeed, of any times. Horatio's taunt to Lothario* seems to have been borrowed from this passage.

Claudio to Leonato.

Away, I will not have to do with you.

Leonato. Canst thou so *dasse* † me ? Thou hast killed my child ;
 If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

Antonio. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed ;
 But that's no matter, let him kill one first ;
 Win me and wear me, let him answer me ;
 Come, follow me, boy—Come, boy, follow me ;
 Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence ;
 Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

Leonato. Brother,——

Antonio. Content yourself—God knows, I loved my niece ;
 And she is dead, slandered to death by villains,
 That dare as well answer a man, indeed,
 As I dare take a serpent by the tongue.
 Boys, apes, braggarts, jacks, milk-fops !

Leonato. Brother Anthony,——

Antonio. Hold you content—What, man ? I know them, yea ;
 And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple :
 Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boys,
 That lye, and cog, and flout, deprave and slander,
 Go antickly, and shew an outward hideousness,
 And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,

* In the Fair Penitent.

† An old English expression, for *putting off*, or *setting aside*.

How they might hurt their enemies—if they durst ;
And this is all.

As I commenced my remarks on this Play with a note of Doctor Warburton's, I shall conclude them, also, with another very judicious observation of the same critic upon this last passage :

“ This brother Anthony is the truest picture imaginable of human nature. He had assumed the character of a Sage, to comfort his brother o'erwhelmed with grief for his only daughter's affront and dishonour; and had severely reproved him for not commanding his passion better, on so trying an occasion. Yet, immediately after this, no sooner does he begin to suspect that his age and valour are slighted, but he falls into the most intemperate fit of rage himself; and all his brother can say, or do, is not of power to pacify him. This is copying Nature with a penetration and exactness of judgment peculiar to Shakespeare. As to the expression, too, of his passion, nothing can be more highly painted.”

A L L ' s W E L L
T H A T E N D S W E L L .

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

KING of France.

BERTRAM, Count of Rouffillon.

LAFEU, an old Lord.

PAROLLES, a Parasite and Coward, attendant on
Bertram.

A Lord.

A Steward.

W O M E N.

COUNTESS of Rouffillon, Mother to Bertram.

HELENA, her Ward, Daughter to a famous Physi-
cian, long since dead.

All's Well That Ends Well:

ACT I. SCENE I.

THE Countess of Roussillon speaking of Helena, her Ward, says,

I have those hopes of her good, that her education promises her; disposition she inherits, which makes fair gifts fairer; for where an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, there commendations go with pity; they are virtues and traitors too; in her they are the better for her simpleness; she derives her honesty, and achieves her goodness.

The Commentators are not agreed in opinion upon the *verbal* sense of this passage—but no matter; I shall leave their criticism undecided, and proceed to the moral interpretation of it; which is, that a *derived* virtue, which implies a natural good disposition, affords considerable assistance to a good education; that accomplishments, without such a foundation, are a disadvantage to the possessors, as but tending to their condemnation and reproach; that the innocence and simplicity of Helena's mind and heart made use of no arts, but left her talents to the natural effect of their own operations; and that though a good disposition may be *inherited*, virtues must be *purchased*.

In the same Scene, when Bertram comes to take leave of his mother, in order to attend the king, she gives him her blessing in a most pathetic manner, and the most effectual too, where the seeds of virtue are, by setting his noble father before him as a pattern. To this she likewise adds some precepts for the conduct of his life, which would have done honour to the first Sages of Ægypt, Greece, or Rome.

Countess. Be thou blest, Bertram, and succeed thy father
In manners, as in shape! Thy blood and virtue
Contend for empire in thee, and thy goodness
Share with thy birth-right! Love all, trust a few,

Do wrong to none ; be able for thine enemy,
 Rather in power, than use ; and keep thy friend
 Under thy own life's key : be checked for silence,
 But never taxed for speech. What Heaven more will,
 That thee may furnish, and my prayers pluck down,
 Fall on thy head ! Farewel, my son !

S C E N E II.

Frequent descriptions of love recur in almost every one of Shakespeare's Plays. The enamoured Helena speaks very affectingly on this subject here ; first, by reproving the vain ambition of her passion for Bertram, a young nobleman so far above her hopes, and then proceeding, notwithstanding, though very naturally, to give an account of the fond indulgencies with which she still nourishes her flame.

Helena. My imagination
 Carries no favour in it, but my Bertram's.
 I am undone ! There is no living, none,
 If Bertram be away—It were all one
 That I should love a bright particular star,
 And think to wed it ; he is so above me.
 In his bright radiance and collateral light
 Must I be comforted ; not in his sphere.
 The ambition in my love thus plagues itself ;
 The hind that would be mated by the lion,
 Must die for love—'Twas pretty, tho' a plague,
 To see him every hour ; to sit and draw
 His arched brows, his hawking eye, his curls,
 In our heart's tablet : heart too capable
 Of every line and trick of his sweet favour !
 But now he's gone ! and my idolatrous fancy
 Must sanctify his relics.

* * *

The preferences which worthless people, flatterers and parasites, too often gain by address and compliances, before persons of unsupple merit and virtue, are well set forth in this place.

Helena, speaking of Parolles, says,

I know him a notorious liar ;
 Think him a great way fool, wholly a coward ;
 Yet these fixed evils sit so fit in him,
 That they take place, when Virtue's steely bones

Look

Look bleak in the cold wind ; full oft we see
Cold wisdom waiting on *superfluous* folly *.

S C E N E IV.

There are some excellent well-spirited reflections here thrown out, to encourage men in the exertion of all their active faculties towards the advancement of their fortunes ; and to earn their independance by the manly means of industry, instead of poorly crouching at the gates of Providence, whining for an alms.

Helena, upon her resolving to undertake the cure of the king's disorder, in hopes through that means to raise her rank and fortune to a respect not unworthy of Bertram, says,

Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
Which we ascribe to heaven. The fated sky
Gives us free scope ; only doth backward pull
Our slow designs, when we ourselves are dull.
What power is it which mounts my love so high,
That makes me see, and cannot *feed mine eye* † ?
Through mightiest space in fortune nature brings
Likes to join likes, and kifs, like native things.
Impossible be strange attempts to those
That *weigh their pain in sense* ‡, and do suppose
What ha'n't been, cannot be—Who ever strove
To shew her merit, that did miss her love ?
The king's disease ! My project may deceive me,
But my intents are fixed, and will not leave me.

S C E N E V.

There is a most beautiful character given here, of a gallant soldier and virtuous courtier, in the description of Bertram's deceased father ; with some just strictures on the deficiency of these qualities, in the succeeding generation ; which being the principal parts of the speech, I have first noted in it ; but as there is also a charming mixture of the old

* Cold, for *naked* ; and *superfluous*, for *well-clothed*.

† *Feed mine eye* ; that is, *with hope*.

‡ Who judge from the common appearances of things.

Warburton.

man and the *old* friend, in the rest of it, I shall here give the whole together.

King to Bertram.

I would I had that corporal soundness now,
 As when thy father and myself in friendship
 First tried our foldiership : he did look far
 Into the service of the time, and was
 Discipled of the bravest. He lasted long ;
 But on us both did haggish age steal on,
 And wore us out of act—it much repairs me
 To talk of your good father ; in his youth
 He had the wit, which I can well observe
 To-day in our young lords : but they may jest
 Till their own scorn return to them, unnoted,
Ere they can bide their levity in honour *.
 So like a courtier, contempt nor bitterness
 Were in his pride or sharpness ; if they were,
 His equal had awaked them ; and his honour,
 Clock to itself, knew the true minute when
 Exceptions bid him speak ; and at that time
 His tongue obeyed the hand. Who were below him
 He used as creatures of another place,
 And bowed his eminent top to their low ranks ;
 Making them proud of his humility ;
 In their poor praise he humbled : Such a man
 Might be a copy to these younger times ;
 Which, followed well, would now demonstrate them
 But goes backward.
 Would I were with him ! he would always say—
 Methinks, I hear him, now—His plausible words
 He scattered not in ears, but grafted them
 To grow there, and to bear—Let me not live—
 Thus his good melancholy oft began,
 On the catastrophe and heel of pastime,
 When it was out—Let me not live, quoth he,
 After my flame lacks oil ; to be the inuff
 Of younger spirits, whose apprehensive senses
 All but new things disdain ; whose judgments are
 Mere fathers of their garments ; whose constancies
 Expire before their fashions—This he wished.
 I, after him, do after him wish too,
 Since I nor wax nor honey can bring home,
 I quickly were dissolved from my hive,
 To give some labourers room.

* Doctor Johnson has given the following note upon this line :

“ This is an excellent observation. Jocular follies and slight offences are
 only allowed by mankind in him that over-powers them by great qualities.”

The self-interruptions in the above speech, how admirably are they in the usual stile of a narrative old man ! What age, what sex, what character, station, or office of life, escapes the touches of Shakespeare's plastic hand !

S C E N E VI.

The diffidence which every one should manifest, respecting their own merits, is well recommended in the following passage.

The steward, speaking to the Countess :

Madam, the care I have had to even * your content, I wish might be rather found in the calendar of my past endeavours ; *for then we wound our modesty, and make foul the cleanness of our deservings, when of ourselves we publish them.*

A C T II. S C E N E VI.

There are a number of moral and philosophic thoughts on worth and virtue, and on the severe laws which the pride and vanity of mankind have established against their own happiness and enjoyments†, delivered here, on the occasion of Bertram's declining a marriage with Helena, who had confessed her love for him to the king, because she happened to have neither birth or means to intitle her to the honour of his alliance.

King. Strange is it, that our bloods,
Whose colour, weight, and heat, poured out together,
Would quite confound distinction, yet stand off
In differences so mighty. If she be
All that is virtuous, save what thou dislikest,
A poor physician's daughter, thou dislikest
Of virtue, for a name. But do not so—
From lowest place when virtuous things proceed,
The place is dignified by the doer's deed ;
Where great addition swells, and virtue none,
It is a dropstied honour—Virtue alone
Is good, without a name ; Helen is so ;
The property by what it is should go,

* To even, to keep pace with.

† *Quam temerè in nosmet legem sancimus iniquam!*

HOR.

Not

Not by the title—She is young, wife, fair;
 In these, to Nature she's immediate heir;
 And these breed honour. 'That is honour's scorn,
 Which challenges itself as honours born,
 And is not like the fire. Honours best thrive,
 When rather from our acts we them derive,
 Than our foregoers. The mere word's a slave,
 Debaucht on every tomb, on every grave;
 A lying trophy; and as oft is dumb,
 Where dust and *damned* † oblivion is the tomb
 Of honoured bones, indeed.

S C E N E VII.

When Lafeu has quitted the scene, after having bullied and abused Parolles, the latter being left alone, makes this soliloquy:

Parolles. Well, thou hast a son that shall take this disgrace of me; scurvy, old, filthy lord! Well—I must be patient; there is no fettering of authority. I'll beat him, by my life, if I can meet him with any convenience, an he were double and double a lord. I'll have no more pity of his age, than I would have of—— I'll beat him, an if I could but meet him again.

Upon this passage Doctor Warburton takes occasion to pay the following just compliment to our Author:

“ This the Poet makes Parolles to speak alone;
 “ and this is nature. A coward would endeavour to
 “ hide his poltroonery even from himself. An or-
 “ dinary writer would have been glad of such an op-
 “ portunity to bring him to a confession.”

A C T III. S C E N E IV.

When Bertram, whom the king had compelled to espouse Helena, flies from France to avoid any farther connection with her, and had engaged in the Tuscan war, her mourning and reflections upon that occasion, are extremely moving and tender; particularly in her manner of accusing herself with having been the cause of all his perils.

† *Reproachful* to the living who neglect monumental inscriptions to the meritorious dead. I am surprized that the Commentators have left this obscure expression without a light.

Helena. Poor lord ! is't I

That chase thee from thy country, and expose
Those tender limbs of thine to the event
Of the none-sparing war ? And is it I
That drive thee from the sportive court, where thou
Wast shot at with fair eyes, to be the mark
Of smoky muskets ? O ye leaden messengers,
That ride upon the violent speed of fire,
Fly with false aim ; pierce the still-moving air,
That sings with piercing—Do not touch my lord.
Whoever shoots at him, I set him there ;
Whoever charges on his forward breast,
I am the caitiff that do hold him to it ;
And though I kill him not, I am the cause
His death was so effected. Better it were
I met the ravening lion, when he roared
With sharp constraint of hunger ; better it were
That all the miseries which Nature owes,
Were mine at once. No. Come thou home, Rousillon,
Whence honour but of danger wins a scar ;
As oft it loses all. I will be gone—
My being here it is that holds thee hence ;
Shall I stay here to do it ? No, no, although
The air of paradise did fan the house,
And angels officed all—I will be gone,
That pitiful rumour may report my flight,
To console thine ear.

ACT IV. SCENE III.

I shall conclude these observations with a reflection made in this place on the mixed character of human nature in general, in which virtue and vice are often so balanced or blended, as to prevent perfection on one hand, and total depravation on the other.

A Lord. The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together. Our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not ; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I have here finished my notes upon all the Comedies of Shakespeare, and hope that the indulgent Reader will be so kind as to dismiss me in this part of my work, with a favourable application of the last title, or, *All's well that ends well.*

Perhaps

Perhaps I may not be allowed the distinction of *Comedies*, as referred to the fourteen foregoing Plays; as the shipwreck in the *Tempest*, *Antigonus* being devoured by a bear, and the Prince dying of grief, in the *Winter's Tale*, &c. are not very comic circumstances; but this is the division that is generally made of our author's drama; though, strictly speaking, his Plays cannot properly be stiled either *Tragedies* or *Comedies*, but are, in truth, a more natural species of composition than either.

K I N G J O H N.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

KING JOHN.

PHILIP, King of France.

ARTHUR, Nephew to King John.

LEWIS, the Dauphin.

CARDINAL PANDULPHO, the Pope's Legate.

SALISBURY, an English Lord.

FAULCONBRIDGE, bastard son to Richard the First.

HUBERT, lieutenant of the Tower.

W O M E N.

CONSTANCE, Mother to Arthur.

K I N G J O H N.

A C T II. S C E N E VI.

THE following speech, though delivered with an air of levity, and expressed in humorous words and images, supplies occasion for three very just reflections. The first, That *self interest*, in the mere worldly sense of the term, is the ruling principle of mankind. Secondly, That men are too apt to inveigh against corruption, more from the being void of temptation themselves, than their being free from this vice; and, lastly, That bad examples in the superior ranks of life, have a dangerous tendency to injure the morals of the inferior classes of a people.

Upon a peace being made between the kings of England and France, in which the right of Arthur to the British throne is betrayed on the one hand, and but poorly compensated on the other, Faulconbridge makes this soliloquy :

F I R S T P A R T.

Mad world, mad kings, mad composition !
 John, to stop Arthur's title in the whole,
 Hath willingly departed with a part ;
 And France, whose armour conscience buckled on,
 Whom zeal and charity brought to the field,
 As God's own soldier *, rounded in the ear
 With that same *purpose-changer*, that fly devil,
 That broker that still breaks the pate of faith,
 That daily break-vow, he that wins of all,
 Of kings, of beggars, old men, young men, maids,
 Who having no external thing to lose,
 But the word *maid*, cheats the poor girl of that ;
 That smooth-faced gentleman, tickling commodity—
 Commodity, the bias of the world ;
 The world, which of itself is poized well,

* To support Arthur's claim.

Made to run even upon even ground ;
 Till this advantage, this vile drawing bias,
 This sway of motion, this commodity,
 Makes it take head from all indifferency,
 From all direction, purpose, course, intent.
 And this same bias, this commodity,
 This bawd, this broker, this all changing word,
 Clapped on the outward eye of fickle France,
 Hath drawn him from his own determined aid,
 From a resolved and honourable war,
 To a most base and vile-concluded peace.

S E C O N D P A R T .

Yet why rail I on this commodity ?
 But for because he hath not wooed me yet ;
 Not that I have the power to clutch my hand,
 When his fair angels would salute my palm ;
 But that my hand, as unattempted yet,
 Like a poor beggar, raileth on the rich.
 Well, while I am a beggar, I will rail,
 And say there is no sin but to be rich ;
 And being rich, my virtue then shall be
 'To say, there is no vice but beggary.

T H I R D P A R T .

Since kings break faith upon commodity,
 Gain, be my lord ; for I will worship thee.

The astonishment of Constance, on hearing that her son's interests are sacrificed to the league, with the doubts which we are naturally inclined to conceive of the truth of sudden ill news, and the weak state of mind and spirits to which persons in misfortune, especially helpless women, are generally reduced, are all finely painted and described in the following speech.

Constance, Arthur, *and* Salisbury.

Constance *to* Salisbury.

Gone to be married * ! Gone to swear a peace !
 False blood to false blood joined ! Gone to be friends !
 Shall Lewis have Blanch, and Blanch those provinces ?
 It is not so ; thou hast mis-spoke, mis-heard ;
 Be well advised, tell o'er thy tale again—

* One of the articles of the compact was an alliance between a niece of John's and the Dauphin, the inheritances which of right belonged to Arthur being the dowry.

It cannot be—thou dost but say, 'tis so.
 I trust I may not trust thee—for thy word
 Is but the vain breath of a common man.
 Believe me I do not believe thee, man—
 I have a king's oath to the contrary.
 Thou shalt be punished for thus frightening me ;
 For I am sick, and capable of fears ;
 Oppressed with wrongs, and therefore full of fears—
 A widow, husbandless, subject to fears ;
 A woman naturally born to fears ;
 And tho' thou now confests thou didst but jest,
 With my vexed spirits I cannot make a truce,
 But they will quake and tremble all this day—
 What dost thou mean by shaking of thy head ?
 Why dost thou look so sadly on my son ?
 What means that hand upon that breast of thine ?
 Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,
 Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds ?
 Be these sad sighs confirmers of thy words ?
 Then speak again ; not all thy former tale,
 But this one word, whether thy tale be true.

A little further, upon Salisbury's confirming the bad news, she conceives a very natural though unreasonable idea, with which, however, we are apt to be impressed toward all messengers of bad tidings, however innocent of the evil :

Fellow, be gone, I cannot brook thy sight—
 This news hath made thee a most ugly man.

*

*

*

That partiality in favour of beauty, which it is natural for all persons to be sensible of, even where their duty and interests in different objects are equal, is strongly marked by Constance, when her son begs her to sustain his wrongs with patience. The whole speech is affecting.

Constance. If thou that bid'st me be content, were grim,
 Ugly and slanderous to thy mother's womb,
 Full of unpleasing blots, and *fightles* * itains,
 Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, *prodigious* †,

* For *unfightly*. Shakespeare often places the negative at the end of the adjective, instead of the beginning. This varies his phrases, and enriches his language. Modern writers are too much *dictionary bound*.

† For *portentous* ; monstrous births being reckoned ominous, formerly.

Patched with foul moles, and eye-offending marks.
 I would not care; I then could be content;
 For then I should not love thee; no, nor thou
 Become thy great birth, nor deserve a crown.
 But thou art fair, and at thy birth, dear boy!
 Nature and Fortune joined to make thee great.
 Of Nature's gifts thou may'st with lilies boast,
 And with the half-blown rose.

In the same Scene, when Salisbury tells her that the two kings had sent for her, and that *be must not return without her*, the answer she makes is full of that dignity, which grief, mixed with resentment, is capable of conferring on illustrious unfortunates; and her whole demeanour upon that occasion is expressive of a great soul, rendered still braver by misfortunes.

Constance. Thou may'st, thou shalt; I will not go with thee.
 I will instruct my sorrows to be proud;
 For grief is proud, and makes his owner stout.
 To me, and to the state of my great grief,
 Let kings assemble; for my grief's so great,
 That no supporter, but the huge firm earth,
 Can hold it up.—Here I and sorrow sit—
 Here is my throne; bid kings come bow to it.

[Sits down on the floor.]

Doctor Johnson has given us a very judicious note on this passage; and as it relates to the passions, which, as well as morals, are a subject of this work, I shall present the reader with a transcript of it here.

“ In *Much Ado About Nothing*, the father of Hero, “ depressed by her disgrace, declares himself so subdued by grief, that *a thread may lead him* *. How “ is it that grief, in Leonato and Lady Constance, “ produces effects directly opposite, and yet both “ agreeable to Nature? Sorrow softens the mind, “ while it is yet warmed by hope; but hardens it, “ when 'tis congealed by despair. Distress, while “ there remains any prospect of relief, is weak and “ flexible; but when no succour appears, is fearless

* Being that I flow in grief,
 The smallest twine may lead me.

ACT IV. Scene II.

“ and stubborn ; angry alike at those who injure,
 “ and at those who do not help ; careless to please,
 “ where nothing can be gained ; and fearless to offend,
 “ when there is nothing further to be dreaded. Such
 “ was this Author’s knowledge of the Passions.”

S C E N E I I.

What expressions can be stronger in themselves, or more shocking to the ears of her oppressors, than the following short exclamation !

Constance. Arm, arm, ye Heavens, against these perjured kings !
A widow cries, be husband to me, Heaven !

Here the speech should have ended ; the four remaining lines but weaken and disgrace it.

S C E N E I I I.

When Philip is urged by the Pope’s Legate to break the league he had just entered into with John, he offers to compound the treachery by *ceasing to be his friend*, but *without becoming his enemy*.

I may disjoin my hand, but not my faith.

To which Pandulpho makes him this reply :

So mak’st thou faith an enemy to faith ;
 And like a civil war set’st oath to oath,
 Thy tongue against thy tongue. O, let thy vow,
 First made to Heaven, first be to Heaven performed !
 That is, to be the champion of the Church.
 What since thou swore’st, is sworn against thyself,
 And may not be performed by thyself.
 For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss,
 Is’t not amiss when it is truly done ?
 And being not done, where doing tends to ill,
 The truth is then most done, not doing it.
 The better act of purposes mistook,
 Is to mistake again ; though indirect,
 Yet indirection thereby grows direct,
 And falsehood falsehood cures ; as fire cools fire,
 Within the scorched veins of one new burned.
 It is religion that doth make vows kept,
 But thou hast sworn against religion ;
 By which thou swear’st against the thing thou swear’st ;
 And mak’st an oath the surety for thy truth,
 Against an oath. The truth thou art unsure
 To swear ; swear only not to be forsworn ;

Else what a mockery should it be to swear ?
 But thou dost swear, only to be forsworn,
 And most forsworn to keep what thou dost swear.
 Therefore thy latter vow's against thy first,
 Is in thyself rebellion to thyself ;
 And better conquest never canst thou make,
 Than arm thy constant and thy nobler parts
 Against these giddy loose suggestions.
 Upon which better part our prayers come in,
 If thou vouchsafe them. But, if not, then know,
 The peril of our curses light on thee,
 So heavy, as thou shalt not shake them off,
 But in despair die under their black weight.

The old Jesuit argues here as ingeniously for the dispensing power of the Papacy, as Satan does in Milton for his rebellion. The object of both is the same ; namely, *the absolute and exclusive dominion of Heaven.*

S C E N E V I.

The wild and enthusiastic manner with which the fondness and despair of Constance for her son, impels her to speak of him, has something extremely moving in it :

Father cardinal, I have heard you say,
 That we shall see and know our friends in Heaven ;
 If that be, I shall see my boy again.
 For since the birth of Cain, the first male child,
 To him that did but yesterday suspire,
 There was not such a gracious creature born.
 But now will canker sorrow eat my bud,
 And chase the native beauty from his cheek ;
 And he will look as hollow as a ghost ;
 As dim and meagre as an ague-fit ;
 And so he'll die : and rising so again,
 When I shall meet him in the court of Heaven,
 I shall not know him ; therefore, never, never,
 Must I behold my *pretty* Arthur more.

There is something very tender and affecting in her making use of the epithet *pretty*, in the last line. It has a better effect there than *dearest*, *angel*, or even *lovely*, (though this last has a more comprehensive sense) would have had in that place. I must beg leave to refer to the Reader's own taste for
the

the justness of this observation ; for I own, I cannot explain why it strikes me in this manner myself.

* * *

The reason why we are apt to cherish grief in our breasts ; that species of it, I only mean, which may be distinguished by the name of *tender sorrow* ; from a peculiar sort of indulgence it is capable of affording us, is admirably well expressed in the following passage :

Pandulpho. You hold too heinous a respect of grief.

Constance. He talks to me who never had a son.

Philip. You seem as fond of grief, as of your child.

Constance. Grief fills the room up of my absent child ;

Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me ;

Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words ;

Remembers me of all his gracious parts ;

Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form ;

Then have I reason to be fond of grief.

Fare you well. Had you such a loss as I,

I could give better comfort than you do.

I will not keep this form upon my head,

[Tearing off her head-dress.]

When there is such disorder in my wits.

O Lord, my boy, my Arthur, my fair son !

My life, my joy, my food, my all the world !

My widow's comfort, and my sorrow's cure.

These last three lines are almost suffocating. I believe no woman with a mother's feeling, could ever be able to pronounce them articulately, even in representation.

Doctor Johnson gives a good note on one of the passages of the above speech :

“ Had you such a loss as I,

“ I could give better comfort than you do.” 1. 7 and 8.

“ This is a sentiment which great sorrow always
“ dictates. Whoever cannot help himself, casts his
“ eyes on others for assistance; and often mistakes
“ their inability for coldness.”

I remember a couple of French lines on this subject of grief, which contain the same thought that Constance expresses above :

“ Mon deuil me plait, et doit toujours me plaire :

“ *Il me tient lieu de celui que je pleurs.*”

S C E N E V I I I.

Lewis. Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale,
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man.

This may be a just image of life, to those who have exhausted its variety, and palled their senses with its pleasures. The speech might not have ill become his father, old Philip, then labouring under baffled hopes and disappointed wishes ; who had just then suffered the mortification of having lost a battle, in the heart of his own dominions, and whose mistaken faith in heaven had obliged him to break faith on earth, without effect too ; but it was certainly rather too premature a sentence to have proceeded from the lips of a young prince, who had been but just married to a woman he loved. Such an impropriety in the character of a speaker, hurts the effect of a thought or sentiment.

In the same Scene, there is a strong description given of the situation of a sovereign, with regard to the people, after he has forfeited their love, confidence, or esteem.

Pandulpho, speaking of John's keeping Arthur in prison :

This act so evilly born, shall cool the hearts
Of all his people, and freeze up their zeal ;
That no so small advantage shall step forth
To check his reign, but they will cherish it.
No natural exhalation in the sky,
No *scape of Nature* *, no distempered day,
No common wind, no customary event,
But they will pluck away its natural cause,
And call them meteors, prodigies, and signs,
Abortives, and presages, tongues of Heaven,
Plainly denouncing vengeance upon John.

* See the note before, in this Play, on the word *prodigious*, in the first Scene of this Act.

And then the hearts
 Of all his people shall revolt from him,
 And kiss the lips of unacquainted change ;
 And pick strong matter of revolt and wrath,
 Out of the bloody fingers ends of John.

A C T I V . S C E N E I V .

The several useful reflections and morals to be collected from the following speeches, are so many, and so mixed, that it is difficult to separate or distinguish them. I shall therefore lay the whole passage together before the Reader, to draw his own inferences from ; and shall also begin the Scene a little earlier than may at first appear to be necessary, not only on account of the admirable painting presented to us in the beginning of it, but in order to shew the situation of circumstances in which the principal speaker stands at the time.

King John and Hubert.

Hubert. My lord, they say five moons were seen to-night ;
 Four fixed, and the fifth did whirl about
 'The other four, in wondrous motion.

John. Five moons ?

Hubert. Old men, and beldams in the streets,
 Do prophecy upon it dangerously.
 Young Arthur's death is common in their mouths ;
 And when they talk of him, they shake their heads,
 And whisper one another in the ear.
 And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist ;
 Whilst he that hears makes tearful action,
 With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.
 I saw a smith stand with his hammer thus,
 The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,
 With open mouth, swallowing a taylor's news ;
 Who with his shears and measure in his hand,
 Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste
 Had fallily thrust upon contrary feet,
 Told of a many thousand warlike French,
 That were embattled, and ranked in Kent.
 Another lean unwashed artificer
 Cuts off his tale, and talks of Arthur's death.

John. Why seek'st thou to possess me with these fears ?
 Why urgest thou so oft young Arthur's death ?
 Thy hand hath murdered him. I had a cause
 To wish him dead ; but thou hadst none to kill him.

Hubert. Had none, my lord? Why, did you not provoke me*?

John. It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves that take their humours for a warrant
To break into the bloody house of life;
And on the winking of authority,
To understand a law, to know the meaning
Of *dangerous* † majesty; when, perchance, it frowns
More upon humour, than advised respect.

Hubert. Here is your hand and seal for what I did.

John. Oh, when the last account 'twixt Heaven and earth
Is to be made, then shall this hand and seal
Witness against us to damnation.
How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds,
Makes deeds ill done? for, hadst not thou been by,
A fellow by the hand of Nature marked,
Quoted, and signed to do a deed of shame,
This murder had not come into my mind.
But taking note of thy abhorred aspect,
Finding thee fit for bloody villainy,
Apt, liable to be employed in danger,
I faintly broke with thee of Arthur's death.
And thou, to be endeared to a king,
Madest it no conscience to destroy a prince.

Hubert. My Lord——

John. Hadst thou but shook thy head, or made a pause,
When I spake darkly what I purposed;
Or turned an eye of doubt upon my face,
Or bid me tell my tale in express words;
Deep shame had struck me dumb, made me break off,
And those thy fears might have wrought fears in me.
But thou didst understand me by my signs,
And didst in signs again parley with sin;
Yea, without stop, didst let thy heart consent,
And consequently thy rude hand to act
The deed, which both our tongues held vile to name—
Out of my sight, and never see me more!
My nobles leave me, and my state is braved,
Even at my gates, with ranks of foreign powers;
Nay, in the body of this fleshy land,
This kingdom, this confine of blood and breath,
Hostility and civil tumult reign,
Between my conscience and my cousin's death.

Doctor Johnson has made a comment on the latter part of this Scene, which the Reader has a right to claim in this place.

* *Provoke me*, for *prompt* or *solicit me*.

† *Difficult* to be dealt with.

“ There are many touches of Nature in this conference of John with Hubert. A man engaged in wickedness would keep the profit to himself, and transfer the guilt to his accomplice. These reproaches vented against Hubert, are not the words of art or policy, but the eruptions of a mind swelling with the consciousness of a crime, and desirous of discharging its misery on another.

“ This account of the timidity of guilt, *hadst thou but shook thy head &c.* is drawn *ab ipsis recessibus mentis*, from an intimate knowledge of mankind ; particularly that line in which he says, that *to have bid him tell his tale in express words* would have *struck him dumb*. Nothing is more certain, than that bad men use all the arts of fallacy upon themselves, palliate their actions to their own minds by gentle terms, and hide themselves from their own detection in ambiguities and subterfuges.”

S C E N E V I I.

When Hubert has been suspected and charged with the murder of prince Arthur, the speech of Faulconbridge to him is finely expressive of the strength of despair arising from a guilty conscience :

If thou didst but consent
To this most cruel act, do but despair,
And if thou want'st a cord, *the smallest thread,*
That ever spider twisted from her womb,
Will strangle thee ; a rush will be a beam
To hang thee on. Or would'st thou drown thyself,
Put but a little water in a spoon,
And it shall be as all the ocean,
Enough to stifle such a villain up.

A C T V. S C E N E I.

The manner and spirit with which great personages should act, on extraordinary occasions of difficulty or danger, are bravely pointed out by the gallant Faulconbridge, in the following speech to king John, when the French had invaded his kingdom.

Faulconbridge.

Faulconbridge. But wherefore do you droop ? Why look you sad ?

Be great in act, as you have been in thought—

Let not the world see fear and sad distrust

Govern the motion of a kingly eye.

Be stirring as the time ; be fire with fire ;

Threaten the threatener, and out-face the brow

Of bragging horror. So shall inferior eyes,

That borrow their behaviours from the great,

Grow great by your example, and put on

The dauntless spirit of resolution.

Away, and glitter like the God of War,

When he intendeth to become the field ;

Shew boldness and aspiring confidence—

What ! shall they seek the lion in his den,

And fright him there ? and make him tremble there ?

O, let it not be said ! *Forage* *, and run

To meet displeasure farther from the doors,

And grapple with him ere he comes so nigh.

S C E N E II.

The struggles and compunctions of a good mind, upon the being necessitated to take that part in a public cause which in polity is stiled Rebellion, and also the horrid nature of a Civil War, are finely and justly drawn here.

Salisbury and the Dauphin.

Salisbury. And, noble Dauphin, albeit we swear

A voluntary zeal and un-urged faith

To your proceedings ; yet, believe me, Prince,

I am not glad that such a fore of time

Should seek a plaister by contemned revolt ;

And heal the inveterate canker of one wound,

By making many—Oh, it grieves my soul,

That I must draw this metal from my side,

To be a widow-maker—Oh, and there,

Where honourable rescue and defence

Cries out upon the name of Salisbury.

But such is the infection of the time,

That for the health and physic of our right,

We cannot deal but with the very hand

Of stern injustice, and confused wrong.

And is't not pity, oh my grieved friends !

That we the sons and children of this isle,

Were born to see so sad an hour as this,

* *Forage*, to range abroad ; this is its original sense, and so used here.

Wherein we step after a stranger march,
 Upon her gentle bosom, and fill up
 Her enemies ranks ? I must withdraw and weep
 Upon the spot of this enforced cause,
 To grace the gentry of a land remote,
 And follow unacquainted colours here !
 What ! here ?—O nation, that thou couldst remove !
 That Neptune' arms, who clippeth thee about,
 Would bear thee from the knowledge of thyself,
 And grapple thee unto a Pagan shore !
 Where these two Christian armies might combine
 The blood of malice in a vein of league,
 And not to spend it so un-neighbourly.

The answer to this speech is fine ; it pays due honour to the generous conflict in the speaker's breast, and makes a distinction between the effects of male and female tears, paying the usual, but too partial, compliment to the former. Be it so—The first are stronger on account of their being more rare, owing solely to the superior harshness of men's natures ; but as the passions and feelings, which the spectator is sensible of, from each, are so very different in their nature too, I cannot see how any sort of comparison can be fairly made between them.

Dauphin. A noble temper dost thou shew in this ;
 And great affection wrestling in thy bosom
 Doth make an earthquake of nobility.
 Oh what a noble combat hast thou fought,
 Between compulsion, and a brave respect !
 Let me wipe off this honourable dew,
 That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks.
 My heart hath melted at a lady's tears,
 Being an ordinary inundation ;
 But this effusion of such manly drops,
 This shower blown up by tempest of the soul,
 Startles mine eyes, and makes me more amazed,
 Than had I seen the vaulty top of heaven
 Figured quite o'er with burning meteors—
 Lift up thy brow, renowned Salisbury,
 And with a great heart heave away this storm.
 Commend these waters to those baby-eyes
 That never saw the giant world enraged ;
 Nor met with fortune other than at feasts,
 Full-warm of blood, of mirth, of gossiping.

S C E N E

S C E N E X.

Salisbury, speaking to King John, perceives him dead.

My Liege ! my Lord !—*but now a king—Now thus !*

This would make a good epitaph for a royal Sepulchre !

This Play closes with one truth in fact, and another in prophecy, which I hope all time will vouch the inspiration of.

Faulconbridge. This England never did, nor ever shall,
Lye at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Now these her *Princes* * are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them—*Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true.*

* The revolted Nobles.

R I C H A R D

T H E

S E C O N D.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

RICHARD the Second.

DUKE of York.

JOHN of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. } Uncles to the
King.

MOWBRAY, Duke of Norfolk.

BOLINBROKE, Son to John of Gaunt.

AUMERLE, Son to the Duke of York.

EARL of Northumberland.

BISHOP of Carlisle.

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP.

EXTON, Governor of Pomfret Castle.

BUSHY, }
SCROOP, } Servants to the King.

W O M E N.

QUEEN to King Richard.

RICHARD the SECOND.

ACT I. SCENE I.

THIS Play opens with a proper caution to all judges and jurors, in criminal causes, to attend most carefully to the principle, or motive, by which the accuser appears to be actuated, that the credit of his testimony may be rated accordingly.

When the King calls the suit of Bolinbroke against Norfolk upon trial, he speaks thus to the father of the former :

King. Old John of Gaunt, *time-honoured* Lancaster,
Hast thou, according to thy oath and bond,
Brought hither Henry Hereford, thy bold son,
Here to make good the boisterous late appeal,
Which then our leisure would not let us hear,
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray ?

Lancaster. I have, my liege.

King. Tell me, moreover, hast thou founded him,
If he appeal the Duke on antient malice,
Or, worthily, as a good subject should,
On some known ground of treachery in him ?

Lancaster. As near as I could sift him on that argument,
On some apparent danger seen in him,
Aimed at your Highness ; no inveterate malice.

King. Then call them to our presence ; face to face,
And frowning brow to brow. Ourselves will hear
The accuser and the accused freely speak.

SCENE II.

When the King forbids the combat, and commands the Duke of Norfolk to throw down Bolinbroke's gage *, he answers with the true spirit of a gallant nobleman :

Norfolk Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot,
My life thou shalt command, but not my shame ;

* A gage, or gauntlet, was a sort of iron glove, or piece of armour for the hand, thrown down in defiance in the old Chivalry, and taken up by the antagonist upon an acceptance of the challenge.

The one my duty owes ; but my fair name,
 Despite of death, that lives upon my grave,
 To dark dishonour's use thou shalt not have.
 I am disgraced, impeached, and baffled here,
 Pierced to the soul with slander's venom'd spear ;
 'The which no balm can cure, but his heart-blood
 Which breathed the poison *.

King. Rage must be withstood.

Give him his gage—Lions make leopards tame.

Norfolk. Yea, but not change their spots. Take but my shame,
 And I resign my gage. My dear, dear lord,
The purest treasure mortal times afford,
Is spotless reputation ; that away,
Men are but gilded loam, or painted clay.
 A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest,
 Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast.
Mine honour is my life, both grow in one ;
Take honour from me, and my life is done.
 Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try ;
 In that I live, and for that I will die.

Afterwards, when Bolinbroke is called upon to the same purpose, he also replies as bravely ; but as he expresses himself in so much an inferior manner to the former, I think it could afford the reader no great entertainment to have the passage quoted.

S C E N E IV.

When the King sentences these two champions to exile, he exacts an oath from them both, not to be reconciled to one another abroad, so far as to confederate against the state of England ; in the administering of which bond, he desires them to

Swear by the duty that you owe to Heaven. . . .

Our part therein we banish with yourselves.

Upon which latter line Doctor Warburton gives the following note :

“ It is a question much debated among the writers
 “ on the *Law of Nations*, whether a banished man
 “ be still tied in allegiance to the state which sent
 “ him into exile. Tully and Clarendon declare for
 “ the affirmative: Hobbes and Puffendorf hold

* It was an old notion in physic, that the blood of a viper, applied to the wound, would cure its bite.

“ the

“ the negative. Our Author, by this line, seems
“ to be of the latter opinion.”

But I agree intirely with Cicero and Clarendon. The undergoing any penalty of law cannot dissolve either the moral or the political duty we owe our country. Socrates, by refusing to escape out of prison, shewed, that he thought his obedience and submission to the state continued still to be obligatory on him, even though the decree was unjust, and the sentence death. And under the *Ostracism*, which imposed banishment upon men for their very eminence and virtue, we do not hear of the illustrious exiles either speaking, or acting, as if they deemed their allegiance to have been cancelled.

Nay, Aristides carried the submission of a good subject so far, as to think himself obliged in duty to write his own name on a *shell*, at the request of an illiterate citizen of Athens, who voted against him on that very law. And Themistocles, though banished through the spirit of faction, not that of the laws, and kindly entertained and preferred in the armies of Persia, chose to swallow poison, rather than march against his country.

’Tis not the community that banishes a man, but the laws which govern it.

“ It is the law, not I, condemns your brother*.”

These surely are no object of resentment; and to rise in arms against a nation, because one of its statutes had fallen heavy upon us, would be just as rational, as to set a forest on fire, because we had received the bastinado by a cudgel that was taken out of it.

S C E N E V.

King *and* Lancaster.

King. Why, uncle? Thou hast many years to live.

Lancaster. But not a minute, king, that thou canst give;
Shorten my days thou canst with fullen sorrow,
And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;

* Angelo to Isabella. *Measure for Measure.*

Thou canst help time to furrow me with age,
 But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage;
 Thy word is current with him for my death;
 But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.

Upon which passage there is the following reflection, in the note by Doctor Johnson :

“ It is matter of very melancholy consideration,
 “ that all human advantages confer more power of doing
 “ evil, than good.” A very melancholy reflection,
 indeed, were we to suppose it true !

In the instance before us, the hand of power, strength, or treachery, may certainly deprive us of a life, which it cannot restore ; but Shakespeare does not mean to make the reflection universal. A good Prince may render his whole people happy ; a bad one can only affect a part. When tyranny becomes general, it defeats itself, at the cost of the oppressor.

If my objection to the above uncomfortable maxim be valid, in the highest example, it would be trifling to adduce any lesser ones to prove it.

S C E N E VI.

Lancaster, by way of comforting his son upon the sentence of banishment, paraphrases and poetifies the old English sentence, of *every place is an honest man's home*, in these words :

All places that the eye of heaven visits,
 Are to a wise man ports and happy havens ;

which lines are followed by a long and equivocal declamation in the stile of the Stoic philosophy ; to which Bolinbroke impatiently replies, in a manner perfectly natural to the unhappy ; for it requires *leisure* to grow wise ; nor is this ever effected by our becoming better able to bear misfortune, but by our feeling it less, from use and habit.

Bolinbroke. Oh, who can hold a fire in his hand,
 By thinking on the frosty *Caucasus* ?
 Or wallow naked in December's snow,
 By thinking on fantastic summer's heat ?
 Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite,
 By bare imagination of a feast * ?

* I have transposed these four lines, to preserve the order of the images.

Oh,

Oh, no! the apprehension of the good,
Gives but the greater feeling to the worse ;
Fell Sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more,
Than when it bites, but lanceth not the sore.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The weight of persuasion which the admonitions of a dying person are apt to impress upon the mind, more than the most lively remonstrances of one in perfect health, is well expressed here. The circumstances of the time impress us with an awe which imprints the advice more strongly on our memory, and gives it additional authority.

Lancaster brought in sick, attended by the Duke of York.

Lancaster. Will the king come, that I may breathe my last
In wholesome counsel to his unstayed youth ?

York. Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your breath ;
For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.

Lancaster. *Oh, but they say the tongues of dying men
Enforce attention like deep harmony.
Where words are scarce, they're seldom spent in vain ;
For they breathe truth, that breathe their words in pain.*
He that no more must say, is listened more
Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose † ;
More are men's ends marked, than their lives before ;
The setting sun, and music in the close,
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last ;
Writ in remembrance more than things long past :
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.

In the continuation of this dialogue, the fatal consequences to a Prince of ill-chosen favourites, the danger of suffering foreign fashions and manners to be introduced into a state, with an enumerative description of the peculiar advantages of England, with regard to its situation, and other happy circumstances, are strongly pointed out.

York. His ear is stop't with other flattering charms ;
As praises of his state ; there are, beside,

† To glose, to flatter.

Lascivious meeters *, to whose venom'd sound
 The open ear of youth doth always listen ;
 Report of fashions in proud Italy,
 Whose manners still our tardy apish nation
 Limp after, in base awkward imitation.
 Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity,
 So it be new, there's no respect how vile,
 That is not quickly buzzed into his ears ?
 Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,
 Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard.
 Direct not him whose way himself will chuse ;
 'Tis breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou lose.

Lancaster. Methinks, I am a prophet new inspired ;
 And thus expiring do foretel of him,
 His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last ;
 For violent fires soon burn out themselves.
 Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short ;
 He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes ;
 With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder.
 Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
 Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.
 This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
 This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
 This other Eden, demi-paradise,
 This fortress, built by Nature for herself,
 Against infection, and the hand of war ;
 This happy breed of men, this little world,
 This precious stone set in the silver sea,
 Which serves it in the office of a wall ;
 Or as a moat defensive to a house,
 Against the envy of less happy lands ;
 This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
 Feared for their breed, and famous for their birth,
 For Christian service, and true chivalry ;
 Renowned for their deeds, as far from home
 As is the Sepulchre, in stubborn Jewry †,
 Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's son ;
 This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,
 Dear for her reputation through the world,
 Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it,
 Like to a tenement, or pelting farm.
 England bound in with the triumphant sea,
 Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
 Of watery Neptune, is bound in with shame,

* Companions, or associates in debauch.

† In the text, the word is *Jury*, which must be a mistake, though it has run through all the editions. The alterations and transpositions in the three foregoing lines, are copied from Doctor Johnson's hint.

With inky blots, and rotten parchment-bonds.
That England that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.

The latter part of this speech seems to be as prophetic as the first, if we compare it to the state of our national debt—to our stocks—by which we have long since become *tenants* to foreigners.

SCENE V.

There are undoubtedly certain notices, or premonitions, in the order of Providence, which mankind have been frequently sensible of; sometimes from dreams, at other times from unaccountable impressions on the mind, foreboding particular misfortunes of our lives, let philosophy reason against the notion ever so wisely.

Indeed, there appears one argument to oppose this opinion, which, in any indifferent case, might be thought sufficiently able to overthrow it; which is, that such hints rarely, if ever, have been found to answer any other purpose, than to render us unhappy before our time.

But matter of fact is not to be controverted by syllogism. The objection only serves to resolve it into a mystery, and leaves it still uninvestigable by human science. The more of such inexplicable secrets of Providence which fall under our observation, the better; as they may serve to rouse the Atheist from his lethargy, and afford the Deist occasion to suspect, at least, that what he calls *Natural Religion*, is not the intire scheme of the Divine œconomy with regard to men:

“ There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
“ Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” HAMLET.

Here follows the passage which gave rise to the above reflection.

The Queen and Bushy.

Bushy. Madam, your majesty is much too sad.
You promised, when you parted from the king,

To lay aside self harming heaviness,
And entertain a chearful disposition.

Queen. To please the king, I did ; to please myself,
I cannot do it ; yet I know no cause
Why I should welcome such a guest as grief ;
Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest,
As my sweet Richard. Yet again, methinks,
Some unborn sorrow, ripe in fortune's womb,
Is coming toward me ; and my inward soul
With something trembles, yet at nothing grieves †,
More than with parting from my lord the king.

Bussy. Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows,
Which shew like grief itself, but are not so ;
For sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,
Divides one thing intire to many objects ;
Like perspectives, which rightly gazed upon,
Shew nothing but confusion : eyed awry,
Distinguish form *. So your sweet majesty,
Looking awry upon your lord's departure,
Finds shapes of grief, more than himself, to wail ;
Which looked on as it is, is nought but shadows
Of what it is not. Gracious Queen, then weep not
More than your lord's departure ; more's not seen ;
Or if it be, 'tis with false sorrow's eye,
Which for things true weeps things imaginary.

Queen. It may be so ; but yet my inward soul
Persuades me otherwise. Howe'er it be,
I cannot but be sad ; so heavy-sad,
As though on thinking on no thought I think,
Makes me with heavy nothing faint and shrink.

Bussy. 'Tis nothing but conceit, my gracious lady.

Queen. 'Tis nothing less ; conceit is still derived
From some fore-father grief ; mine is not so ;
For nothing hath begot my something grief ;
Not something hath the nothing that I grieve.
'Tis in reversion that I do possess ‡ ;
But what it is, that is not yet known ; what
I cannot name, is nameless woe, I wot.

Shakespeare has given a description of the same
complexion of mind, before, in the person of Antho-
nio, in the Merchant of Venice. See my first remark
on the First Scene of the First Act of that Play.

† This line is altered for the better by Doctor Warburton.

* Alluding to a method of drawing, called *inverted perspective*, among the ma-
thematical recreations.

‡ That is, *that has possessed my mind*. Johnson.

SCENE IX.

Hope has been often termed the *assuager of our grief*; but Shakespeare has justly raised it to an higher character, by making it an *augmentation to our joys*, also.

Bolinbroke. And hope to joy, is little less in joy,
Than hope enjoyed.

ACT III. SCENE II.

The bishop of Carlisle, endeavouring to awaken the king to a manly exertion of his spirit against the rebellion, and neither to trust to the weak defence of right against might, nor expect that Providence shall, out of respect to his *divine right*, fight his battles for him, while he looks idly on, says,

The means that Heaven yields must be embraced,
And not neglected; else, if Heaven would,
And we would not Heaven's offer, we refuse
The proffered means of succour and redress.

To which the king, after expressing a contempt for Bolinbroke and his adherents, makes a reply agreeable to the vain notion and political superstition of those times, with regard to the absurd doctrine of *indefeasible right*.

King. Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm from an anointed king;
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord.
For every man that Bolinbroke hath prest,
To lift sharp steel against our golden crown,
Heaven for his Richard hath in heavenly pay
A glorious angel; then, if angels fight,
Weak men must fall, for Heaven still guards the right.

SCENE III.

However, he afterwards begins to speak more rationally upon this subject; for though he appears a little cast down at first, yet, on hearing some further ill news, he rouses himself again, in the following speech:

King. I had forgot myself. Am I not king?
Awake, thou coward majesty, thou sleep'st;

Is not the king's name forty-thousand names * ?
 Arm, arm, my name ; a puny subject strikes
 At thy great glory. Look not to the ground,
 Ye favourites of a king, are we not high ?
 High be our thoughts.

SCENE IV.

But this poor abdicating king had no true heroism in his soul ; for, upon the intelligence of some more cross events arriving to him just after, he suddenly drops the character of a fighting prince, and immediately sinks into that of a preaching priest.

Enter Scroop.

Scroop. More health and happiness betide my liege,
 Than can my care-tun'd tongue deliver him !

King. Mine ear is open, and mine heart prepared.
 The worst is worldly loss thou canst unfold.
 Say, is my kingdom lost ? Why, 'twas my care ;
 And what loss is it, to be rid of care ?
 Strives Bolinbroke to be as great as we ?
Greater he shall not be ; if he serve God,
We'll serve him too, and be his fellow so.
 Revolt our subjects, that we cannot mend ;
 They break their faith to God, as well as us.
 Cry woe, destruction, ruin, loss, decay ;
 The worst is death, and death will have his day.

This kind of homily he continues afterwards, in the same Scene ; including, however, some good reflections on the unstable and unsatisfactory state of mortality, even in the highest spheres of life ; which would have become his confessor better than they did himself, as the spirited Bishop, a true son of *the church militant*, tells him, in the close of the following passage.

Aumerle. Where is the duke, my father, with his power ?

King. No matter where—Of comfort no man speak—
 Let's talk of graves, of worms, of epitaphs ;
 Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes
 Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth !
 Let's chuse executors, and talk of wills.
 And yet not so—for what can we bequeath,

* There is the same thought in Richard the Third. " Besides, the king's name
 " is a tower of strength."

Save our deposed bodies to the ground ?
 Our lands, our lives, our all are Bolinbroke's,
 And nothing can we call our own, but death ;
 And that small model of the barren earth,
 Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.
 For Heaven's sake, let us sit upon the ground.
 And tell sad stories of the death of kings ;
 How some had been deposed, some slain in war ;
 Some haunted by the ghosts they dispossessed ;
 Some poisoned by their wives ; some sleeping killed * ;
 All murdered—For within the hollow crown,
 That rounds the mortal temples of a king,
 Keeps Death his court ; and there the antick sits,
 Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp ;
 Allowing him a breath, a little scene
 To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks ;
 Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
 As if this flesh, which walls about our life,
 Were brass impregnable ; and, humoured thus,
 Comes at the last, and with a little pin
 Bores thro' his castle-walls, and farewell king !
 Cover your heads, and mock not flesh and blood
 With solemn reverence ; throw away respect,
 Tradition †, form, and ceremonious duty,
 For you have but mistook me, all this while ;
 I live on bread, like you ; feel want, like you ;
 Taste grief, need friends, like you—Subjected thus,
 How can you say to me, Thou art a king ?

Bishop. My lord, wise men ne'er wail their present woes,
 But presently prevent the ways to wail.
 To fear the foe, since fear oppresseth strength,
 Gives, in your weakness, strength unto your foe ;
 And so your follies fight against yourself.
 Fear, and be slain ; no worse can come from fight ;
 And fight and die, is death destroying death ;
 Where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

There are several other passages of the same kind,
 in this and the subsequent Act, where Richard alter-
 nately rises to a vain confidence in his *indefeasible*
right, and then sinks again under a despondency
 about his fortunes ; which I shall not disgust the
 Reader with here, as the representation of a great

* In these three lines our author seems to have minuted down notes for his
 Henry VI, Richard III, Macbeth, and Hamlet.

† By this expression may be meant the popular superstition of *the divine right*
of kings.

man suffering misfortunes meanly, is rather an object of contempt than of compassion.

In the latter part of this Scene, upon his finding matters growing worse and worse, he exclaims,

By Heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly,
That bids me be of comfort, any more.

Doctor Johnson has prevented my observation on this passage, by a note of his upon it.

“ This sentiment is drawn from Nature. Nothing
“ is more offensive to a mind convinced that its distress
“ is without a remedy, and preparing to submit
“ quietly to irresistible calamity, than those petty
“ and conjectured comforts which unskilful officiousness
“ thinks it virtue to administer.”

ACT V. SCENE I.

There is something, however, extremely affecting, in what this unhappy man says to his queen, upon her lamenting the misery of his situation.

King. Join not with grief, *fair woman*, do not so,
To make my end too sudden!

This short sentence lays hold of the heart, makes us forget him as a king, and feel for him as a man. The fondness of his expression too, of *fair woman*, increases the tenderness of our regret at the additional unhappiness of their separation.

SCENE II.

This poor moralizing prince makes a very just observation here, on the nature of all alliances in vice.

The King to Northumberland.

Northumberland, thou ladder, wherewithal
The mounting Bolinbroke ascends my throne,
The time shall not be many hours of age,
More than it is, ere foul sin gathering head
Shall break into corruption; thou shalt think,
Though he divide the realm, and give thee half,
It is too little, helping him to all;
And he shall think that thou who know'st the way

To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,
 Being ne'er so little urged, another way
 To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne.
The love of wicked friends converts to fear ;
That fear to hate ; and hate turns one or both
To worthy danger, and deserved death.

A further and stronger reflection upon such vicious connections, occurs in the last Scene of this Play, which I shall bring forward here before its time, where Exton, who had murdered Richard, brings an account of his great service to Bolinbroke.

Bolinbroke. They love not poison, that do poison need ;
 Nor do I thee—though I did wish him dead,
 I hate the murderer, love him murdered.
 The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour ;
 But neither my good word, nor princely favour.
 With Cain, go wander through the shade of night,
 And never shew thy head by day or light.

SCENE X.

The following soliloquy, in which the state of the mind is compared to that of the world, though the thought is rather too much laboured, deserves to be quoted, on account of the beauties it contains, the reflections it supplies, as well as for the moral compassion, and generous resentment, with which it is capable of inspiring the virtuous Reader for the unhappy speaker.

King, in prison at Pomfret Castle.

I have been studying how to compare
 This prison where I live, unto the world ;
 And for because the world is populous,
 And here is not a creature but myself,
 I cannot do it ; yet I'll hammer on't.
 My brain I'll prove * the female to my soul,
 My soul the father ; and these two beget
 A generation of still-breeding thoughts ;
 And these same thoughts people this little world,
 In humour like the people of this world ;
For no thought is contented. The better sort,
 As thoughts of things divine, are intermixt
 With scruples, and do set the word itself
 Against the word—as thus—*Come, little ones—*
 And then again,

* Prove, for suppose,

*It is as hard to come, as for a camel
 To tread the postern of a needle's eye *—*
 Thoughts tending to ambition they do plot.
 Unlikely wonders ; how these vain weak nails
 May tear a passage through the flinty ribs
 Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls ;
 And for they cannot, die in their own pride—
 Thoughts tending to content, flatter themselves
 That they are not the first of fortune's slaves,
 And shall not be the last ; like silly beggars,
 Who sitting in the stocks, refuge their shame,
 That many have, and others must sit there :
 And in this thought they find a kind of ease,
 Bearing their own misfortune on the back
 Of such as have before endured the like.
 Thus play I, in one prison, many people,
And none contented. Sometimes am I a king,
 Then treason makes me with myself a beggar,
 And so I am. Then crushing penury
 Persuades me I was better when a king ;
 Then am I king'd again ; and, by and by,
 Think that I am unking'd by Bolinbroke,
 And straight am nothing. But whate'er I am,
 Nor I, nor any man, that but man is ;
*With nothing will be pleased, till he be eas'd
 With being nothing.*

The last reflection has been so often made and remarked upon, before, in the course of this Work, that I shall leave it unnoticed here, and so conclude my observations on this Play.

* I do not see how these texts contradict each other. They are spoken of different objects. Children surely may go to Heaven, though misers may not.

HENRY the FOURTH.

FIRST PART.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HENRY the Fourth.
HENRY Prince of Wales.
EARL OF WORCESTER.
HOTSPUR.
GLENDOWER.
MORTIMER.
DOUGLAS.
FALSTAFF.

W O M E N.

LADY PERCY, wife to Hotspur.
LADY MORTIMER.

HENRY the FOURTH.

FIRST PART.

ACT I. SCENE I.

IN the first speech here, Henry the Fourth, in order to encourage his subjects to attend him with the better spirit on the *Crusade* expedition, which he had then resolved upon, gives a horrid description of their former state of civil war, which the kingdom was happily at that time free from.

King. No more the thirsty *entrails* * of this soil
 Shall *trempe* † her lips with her own children's blood ;
 No more shall trenching war channel her fields,
 Nor bruise her flowrets with the armed hoofs
 Of hostile paces. Those opposed files,
 Which like the meteors of a troubled Heaven,
 All of one nature, of one substance bred,
 Did lately meet in the intestine shock,
 And furious close of civil butchery,
 Shall now in mutual well-beseeming ranks
 March all one way, and be no more opposed
 Against acquaintance, kindred, and allies ;
 The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife,
 No more shall cut his master.

SCENE II.

The method that men take to disguise the nature of their vices, by palliating epithets, is of dangerous consequences in life. It not only serves to blunt the edge of remorse in ourselves, but often helps to induce a milder censure in others, upon the most flagrant enormities.

Thus a profligate fellow, who debauches every woman in his power, is stiled *a man of gallantry* ; a penniless adventurer, who carries off a rich heiress,

* The word in the text is *entrance*, which has puzzled all the Commentators. I am surprized at it ; for I think the alteration I have made, so obvious, that I hardly claim any merit from it.

† *Soak*, or *steep*.

is called *a soldier of fortune*; a duellist, dubbed with the title of *a man of honour*; a sharper, *un chevalier d'industrie*; an atheist, a *free-thinker*; and so forth.

A good specimen of this sort of deceitful phraseology is presented to us in part of this Scene.

Falstaff to the Prince.

Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are *squires* of the night's body, be called thieves of the day's booty. Let us be *Diana's foresters*, *gentlemen of the shade*, *minions of the moon*; and let them say we be *men of good government*, being governed as the sea is, by our *noble and chaste mistress the moon*; under whose countenance we—steal.

Pistol, in some other place, says of *stealing*, “*convey the wife it call **.”

S C E N E III.

I think I may venture to pronounce, for the honour of human nature, that the most abandoned person breathing, means not to pass his whole life in a state of profligacy. He purposes, from time to time, *to take up*, as the phrase is; but is too apt, from time to time, to procrastinate his amendment; thus silencing the clamours of his conscience, by the hopeful design of reformation, and thinking his repentance sufficiently advanced, by a self-confession of his vice or immorality.

The danger of this species of *quietism*, is strongly pointed out, in part of a work lately published; and as it may afford a useful warning to some of my dissipated readers, I shall quote the passage I allude to here.

An EPI TAPH on Human Life.

*Eheu! fugaces, Postume, Postume,
Labuntur anni!*

HOR.

Be early wise, lest prudence come too late!
Think how *to-morrow* steals from us *to-day*,
And leaves the spendthrift further in arrear,
To purposes unfinished! till old Time,

* Merry Wives of Windsor.

*Who lends on usury, calls in the account,
And takes the body for its debt unpaid,
Foreclosing life in the insolvent tomb * !*

The following speech affords us a beautiful instance of this method of amusing our too flexible and indolent tempers of mind ; which I copy here with the greater pleasure, as the speaker of it did effectually reform his life and manners, and has enriched the annals of England with a memoir of true glory.

The Prince of Wales, speaking of his loose companions, who had just quitted the scene, says,

I know ye all, and will a-while uphold
The unyoked humour of your idleness ;
Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world ;
That when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wondered at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours, that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work ;
But when they seldom come, they wished for come,
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
So when this loose behaviour I throw off,
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify † men's hopes ;
And, like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation glittering o'er my fault,
Shall shew more goodly, and attract more eyes,
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend, to make offence a skill ;
Redeeming time, when men think least I will.

S C E N E IV.

When the brave Hotspur is taxed by the king with having refused to surrender the prisoners which he had taken at the gallant action of *Holmedon-Moor*, to his order, the speech he makes upon that occasion, in excuse for his refractoriness, presents us with a

* *Something New.*

† *Falsify for exceed.* Doctor Johnson.

very natural description of the uneasy, froward, and difficult temper of mind, a person is subject to in such circumstances as he paints himself to be at the time mentioned; and also entertains us with a character, admirably and humorously drawn, of a pert, foppish, and affected Court minion. The contrast of the two figures here before us, would make an excellent picture on canvas.

Hotspur. My liege, I did deny no prisoners;
 But I remember, when the fight was done,
 When I was dry with rage, and extreme toil,
 Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
 Came there a certain lord, neat, trimly drest,
 Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin new reaped,
 Shewed like a stubble land at harvest home.
 He was perfumed like a milliner,
 And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
 A pouncet-box, which ever and anon
 He gave his nose, and took't away again.
 And still he smiled and talked—
 And as the soldiers bare dead bodies by,
 He called them untaught knaves, unmannerly,
 To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse
 Betwixt the wind and his nobility.
 With many holiday and lady terms
 He questioned me—Among the rest, demanded
 My prisoners, on your majesty's behalf.
 I then, all smarting with my wounds grown cold,
 Out of my grief, and my impatience,
 To be so pestered with a popinjay *,
 Answered neglectingly I know not what;
 He should, or should not; for he made me mad,
 To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,
 And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman,
 Of guns, and drums, and wounds—God save the mark!
 And telling me the sov'reignest thing on earth,
 Was *Parmacity* † for an inward bruise;
 And that it was great pity, *so it was*,
 That villainous salt-petre should be digg'd
 Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
 Which many a good tall fellow had destroyed
 So cowardly. And but for these vile guns,
 He would himself have been a soldier—
 This bold unjointed chat of his, my lord,

* These lines are transposed, as hinted by Doctor Johnson.

† A corruption of the word *spermaceti*.

I answered

I answered indirectly, as I said ;
 And, I beseech you, let not this report
 Come current for an accusation
 Betwixt my love and your high majesty.

The king, not being satisfied with his apology,
 says to him, after some prior altercation between
 them,

Send me your prisoners with the speediest means,
 Or you shall hear in such a kind from me,
 As will displease you——
 Send us your prisoners, or you'll hear of it. [Exit.

Upon this menace, the impatient temper of
 Hotspur breaks out into the following expressions ;
 which, though the substance of them does not fall
 within the purpose of this Work, I shall, however,
 repeat here, and also continue the dialogue a good
 deal further, as it leads to the character of the
 speaker, which I design to give a description of, in
 the close of my observations on the two next Plays.

Hotspur. And if the devil come and roar for them,
 I will not send them. I'll after, trait,
 And tell him so ; for I will ease my heart,
 Although it be with hazard of my head.

And again, to the same purpose :

I'll keep them all—
 By Heaven, he shall not have a Scot of them ;
 No, if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not—
 I'll keep them, by this hand—

Worcester. You start away,
 And lend no ear unto my purposes—
 Those prisoners you shall keep.

Hotspur. I will ; that's flat—
 He said he would not ransom Mortimer,
 Forbad my tongue to speak of Mortimer * ;
 But I will find him when he lies asleep,
 And in his ear I'll holla, Mortimer !
 Nay, I will have a starling taught to speak
 Nothing but Mortimer, and give it him,
 To keep his anger still in motion.

Worcester. Hear you, cousin, a word.

* This was in part of the altercation between them, in this scene, not quoted
 above.

Hotspur. All studies here I solemnly defy,
 Save how to gall and pinch this Bolinbroke.
 And that same swash-buckler, the Prince of Wales,
 But that I think his father loves him not,
 And would be glad he met with some mischance,
 I'd have him poisoned with a pot of ale.

Worcester. Farewel, my kinsman! I will talk to you
 When you are better tempered to attend.

Northumberland. Why, what a wasp-tongued and impatient fool
 Art thou, to break into this woman's mood,
 Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own?

Hotspur. Why, look you, I am whipt and scourged with rods,
 Nettled and stung with pismires, when I hear
 Of this vile politician Bolinbroke.
 In Richard's time—What do you call the place?
 A plague upon't—it is in Glostershire—
 'Twas where the madcap duke his uncle kept—
 His uncle York—where I first bowed my knee
 Unto this *king of smiles*, this Bolinbroke,
 When you and he came back from Ravenspurg.

Northumberland. At Berkley Castle.

Hotspur. You say true—
 Why, what a deal of candied courtesy
 This fawning greyhound then did proffer me!
 Look, *when his infant fortune came of age—*
 And gentle Harry Percy—and kind cousin—
 The devil take such cozeners—God forgive me—
 Good uncle, tell your tale, for I have done.

* * *

The precarious confidence that men can venture to place in unwarrantable services performed for another, is well marked in the same scene, by one of the disloyal conspirators who had assisted Henry to dethrone king Richard.

Worcester. For, bear ourselves as even as we can,
 The king will always think him in our debt;
 And think we deem ourselves unsatisfied,
 Till he hath found a time to *pay us home*.

The Reader may here refer back to the quotation from the Second Scene in the Fifth Act of the former Play.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

In this truly *comic* Scene, which may be the rather stiled so, because there is no *buffoonery* in it, and which I therefore think preferable even to the humour of Falstaff, the vanity of old Glendower, in supposing himself to have been a peculiar object of the notice of Providence, which has, however, been the foible of several great men, Cæsar, &c. with the vulgar ignorance of mistaking natural events for miracles, is finely contrasted with the careless humour, sturdy spirit, and rational investigation of Hotspur.

It would be doing injustice to the dialogue, to parcel it out as it refers singly to the several articles above specified; therefore I shall entertain my readers with the whole passage intire, leaving them to mark the application in their own minds which will occur in their proper places.

Glendower, Hotspur, Worcester, and Mortimer.

Mortimer. These promises are fair, the parties sure,
And our induction * full of prosperous hope.

Hotspur. Lord Mortimer and cousin Glendower,
Will you sit down?
And uncle Worcester—a plague upon't!
I have forgot the map.

Glendower. No, here it is.
Sit, cousin Percy—sit, good cousin Hotspur—
For, by that name, as oft as Lancaster
Doth speak of you, his cheek looks pale; and with
A rising sigh he wisheth you in Heaven.

Hotspur. And you in hell, as often as he hears
Owen Glendower spoke of.

Glendower. I blame him not—At my nativity,
The front of Heaven was full of fiery shapes,
Of burning cressets †. Know, that, at my birth,
The frame and the foundation of the earth
Shook like a coward.

Hotspur. And so it would have done,
At the same season, if your mother's cat
Had kittened, though yourself had ne'er been born.

* Beginning or entrance upon action.

† Bonfires, or any blazing light.

Glendower. I say, the earth did shake when I was born.

Hotspur. I say, the earth then was not of my mind,
If it suppose as fearing you it shook.

Glendower. The Heavens were all on fire, the earth did tremble.

Hotspur. O then the earth shook to see the Heavens on fire,
And not in fear of your nativity.

Diseased Nature oftentimes breaks forth
In strange eruptions; and the teeming earth
Is with a kind of cholick pinched and vext,
By the imprisoning of unruly wind
Within her womb; which for enlargement striving,
Shakes the old beldam earth, and topples down
High towers, and moss-grown steeples. At your birth,
Our grandam earth, with this distemperature,
In passion shook.

Glendower. Cousin, of many men
I do not bear these crossings. Give me leave
To tell you, once again, that, at my birth,
The front of Heaven was full of fiery shapes;
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds
Were strangely clamorous in the frightened fields.
These signs have marked me extraordinary;
And all the courses of my life do shew
I am not in the roll of common men.
Where is he living, clipt in with the sea,
That chides the banks of England, Wales, or Scotland,
Who calls me pupil, or hath read to me?
And bring him out that is but woman's son,
Can trace me in the tedious ways of art,
Or hold me pace in deep experiments.

Hotspur. I think there's no man speaks better Welch—
I'll to dinner——

Mortimer. Peace, cousin Percy, you will make him mad.

Glendower. I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

Hotspur. Why, so can I; or so can any man—
But will they come when you do call for them?

Glendower. Why, I can teach thee to command the devil.

Hotspur. And I can teach thee, coz, to shame the devil;
By telling truth—*Tell truth, and shame the devil.*
If thou hast power to raise him, bring him hither,
And I'll be sworn I've power to shame him hence—
O, while you live, *tell truth, and shame the devil.*

Mortimer. Come, come!
No more of this unprofitable chat.

Glendower. Three times hath Henry Bolinbroke made head
Against my power; thrice from the banks of Wye,

And

And sandy-bottomed Severn, have I sent
Him bootless home, and weather-beaten back.

Hotspur. Home, without boots, and in foul weather too !
How scaped he agues, in the Devil's name ?

Glendower. Come, here's the map, shall we divide our right,
According to our threefold order taken ?

Hotspur. Methink my portion, north from Burton here,
In quantity equals not one of yours—
See how this river comes me cranking in,
And cuts me from the best of all my land
An huge half moon, a monstrous cantle out.
I'll have the current in this place dammed up ;
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run
In a new channel, fair and evenly ;
It shall not wind with such a deep indent,
To rob me of so rich a bottom here.

Glendower. Not wind ? It shall, it must, you see it doth.

Hotspur. I'll have it so ; a little charge will do it.

Glendower. I will not have it altered.

Hotspur. Will not you ?

Glendower. No, nor you shall not.

Hotspur. Who shall say me nay ?

Glendower. Why, that will I.

Hotspur. Let me not understand you then.
Speak it in Welch.

Glendower. I can speak English, lord, as well as you,
For I was trained up in the English court ;
Where, being young, I framed to the harp
Many an English ditty, lovely well,
And gave the tongue * a helpful ornament ;
A virtue that was never seen in you.

Hotspur. Marry, and I'm glad of it, with all my heart—
I had rather be a kitten, and cry *mew* !
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers ;
I'd rather hear a brazen candlestick turned,
Or a dry wheel grate on the axle-tree,
And that would nothing set my teeth on edge,
Nothing so much as mincing poetry ;
'Tis like the forced gait of a shuffling nag.

Glendower. Come, you shall have Trent turned.

Hotspur. I do not care—I'll give thrice so much land,
To any well-deserving friend—
But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,
I'll cavil on the ninth part of an hair.

* The English language.

S C E N E II.

Again, after Glendower goes away,

Mortimer. Fie, cousin Percy, how you cross my father?

Hotspur. I cannot chuse. Sometimes he angers me
 With telling of the moldwarp and the ant *,
 Of dreamer Merlin, and his prophecies ;
 And of a dragon, and a finless fish,
 A clipt wing griffin, and a moulting raven,
 A couching lion, and a rampant cat ;
 And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff,
 As puts me from my faith. I tell you what,
 He held me, the last night, at least three hours,
 In reckoning up the several devils names,
 That were his lackeys—I cried *hum*—and *well*—
 But marked him not a word—O, he's as tedious,
 As a tired horse, or as a railing wife ;
 Worse than a smokey house. I'd rather live
 With *chuse and garlic* † in a windmill, far,
 Than feed on *cates* ‡, and have him talk to me,
 In any summer-house in christendom.

S C E N E III.

Here is a beautiful description given of that most pleasing crisis of mind and body, between sleeping and waking, when the passions are just subsiding to rest, but the senses not yet deprived of their notices.

Lady Mortimer, daughter to Glendower, not being able to speak any language but Welch to her husband, which he does not understand, the father undertakes to interpret between them.

Mortimer. O, I am ignorance itself in this.

Glendower. She bids you

All on the wanton rushes lay you down,
 And rest your gentle head upon her lap,
 And she will sing the song that pleaseth you,
 And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep,
 Charming your blood with pleasing heaviness ;
Making such difference betwixt wake and sleep,
As is the difference betwixt day and night,

* Hall's Chronicles say, that some such prediction had induced Glendower to rise against Henry the Fourth.

† Welch fare.

‡ Viands, or savoury meats.

The hour before the heavenly harnessed team
Begins his golden progress in the east.

There is neither *metre-ballad-mongers* stuff nor *mincing poetry*, in the above speech. If Glendower is not original in it, he has at least the merit of a good translator.

A little further on in the same scene, the usual expletives of conversation, and childish phrases of asseveration, are humorously turned into ridicule.

After lady Mortimer has sung her Welch song, Hotspur, in order to amuse his mind, then pondering on momentous intents, says to his wife,

Come, I'll have your song too.

Lady Percy. Not mine, *in good sooth*.

Hotspur. Not yours, *in good sooth*! Why, you swear like a comfit-maker's wife—Not you, *in good sooth*; and *as true as I live*; and *as God shall mend me*; and *as sure as day*; and givest such farcenet surety for thy oaths, as if thou hadst never walked further than Finsbury.

Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
A good mouth-filling oath, and leave *in sooth*,
And such protest of *pepper gingerbread* *,
To velvet guards, and Sunday citizens.
Come, sing.

S C E N E IV.

This whole Scene is so beautiful, so spirited, and so affecting, that it would be a massacre in literature to sever its members asunder; which I should lay myself under the barbarous necessity of doing, were the several sentiments, observations, and reflections, which naturally arise from it, suffered to challenge their several references separately: I shall therefore serve up the compact body of it unbroken, before the Reader, and leave the dissection of its parts to his own judgment, taste, and feeling.

Let the father who has an untoward son, here learn how best to reprove; let the youth, whose

* This is but an odd sort of simile, for a *mild* note of affirmation. The Commentators neither explain the meaning, nor confess their ignorance about it. 'Tis easy to be a critic on these terms.

virtues are obscured by his errors, be instructed how to reform; let the sovereign, who would preserve his dignity, be hence taught how to maintain it; and the king, whose foibles have rendered him the object of contempt, be herein warned of the dangerous consequences of his becoming despised.

The King, and the Prince of Wales.

King. I know not whether God will have it so,
For some displeasing service I have done,
That in his secret doom, out of my blood
He'll breed revengement, and a scourge for me;
But thou dost, in thy passages of life,
Make me believe that thou art only marked
For the hot vengeance, and the rod of heaven,
To punish my mis-treadings. Tell me, else,
Could such inordinate and low desires,
Such poor, such base, such lewd, such mean attainis,
Such barren pleasures, rude society,
As thou art matched withal, and grafted to,
Accompany the greatness of thy blood,
And hold their level with thy princely heart?

Prince. So please your majesty, I would I could
Quit all offences with as clear excuse,
As well as I am doubtless I can purge
Myself of many I am charged withal.
Yet such extenuation let me beg,
As on reproof of many tales devised,
Which oft the ear of greatness needs must hear,
By smiling pick-thanks, and base news-mongers,
I may for some things true, wherein my youth
Hath faulty wandered and irregular,
Find pardon on my true submission.

King. Heaven pardon thee. Yet let me wonder, Harry,
At thy affections, which do hold a wing
Quite from the flight of all thy ancestors.
Thy place in council thou hast rudely lost,
Which by thy younger brother is supplied;
And art almost an alien to the hearts
Of all the court and princes of my blood.
The hope and expectation of thy time
Is mined, and the soul of every man
Prophetically does fore-think thy fall.
Had I so lavish of my presence been,
So common hackneyed in the eyes of men,
So stale and cheap to vulgar company,

Opinion,

Opinion, that did help me to the crown,
 Had still kept loyal to possession *,
 And left me in reputeless banishment ;
 A fellow of no mark or likelihood.
 But being seldom seen, I could not stir,
 But, like a comet, I was wondered at,
 That men would tell their children, *This is he* ;
 Others would say, *Where ? Which is Bolinbroke ?*
 And then I stole all courtesy from heaven †,
 And dressed myself in such humility,
 That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
 Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths,
 Even in the presence of the crowned king.
 Thus I did keep my person fresh and new,
 My presence, like a robe pontifical,
 Ne'er seen but wondered at ; and so my state,
 Seldom, but sumptuous, shewed like a feast,
 And won by rareness such solemnity.
 The skipping king he ambled up and down,
 With thallow jesters and rash *bawin* ‡ wits,
 Soon kindled and soon burnt ; 'scarded his state,
 Mingled his royalty with carping fools,
 Had his great name profaned with their scorns,
 And gave his countenance against his name ||,
 To laugh at gibing boys, and stand the pulch
 Of every beardless vain *comparative* § ;
 Grew a companion to the common streets,
 Enfeoff'd himself to popularity ¶ ;
 That being daily swallowed by men's eyes,
 They surfeited with honey, and began
 To loath a taste of sweetness ; *whereof a little*
More than a little, is by much too much **.
 So when he had occasion to be seen,
 He was but as the cuckoo is in June,
 Heard, not regarded ; seen, but with such eyes,
 As, sick and blunted with community,
 Afforded no extraordinary gaze,

* True to the late king, Richard the Second.

† Alluding to the theft of Prometheus.

‡ *Bawin*, a sort of slight fuel, that catches fire quickly, but wants substance to preserve it long.

|| Sunk his dignity in mean familiarity.

§ *Comparative*—Any idle companion that would set himself on a level with him.

¶ Gave the *livery* and *seizin* of his person away, by exposing it too frequently to the public view.

** They deny Shakespeare to have been a classic scholar, but one would fancy that he was both a master and admirer of Ovid, by the *man'y* and *puerile* stile he frequently mixes together in the same passage ; as in this instance, for one, among many.

Such as is bent on sun-like majesty,
 When it shines seldom in admiring eyes ;
 But rather drowzed and hung their eye-lids down,
 Slept in his face, and rendered such aspect,
 As cloudy men use to their adversaries ;
 Being with his presence glutted, gorged, and full.
 And in that very line, Harry, stand'st thou ;
 For thou hast lost thy princely privilege
 With vile participation ; not an eye,
 But is a-weary of thy common sight,
 Save mine, which hath desired to see thee more ;
 Which now doth, what I would not have it do,
 Make blind itself with foolish tendernefs.

Prince. I shall, hereafter, my most gracious lord,
 Be more myself.

King. For all the world
 As thou art, at this hour, was Richard then,
 When I from France set foot at Ravenspur ;
 And even as I was then, is Percy now.
 Now by my sceptre, and my soul to boot,
 He hath more worthy interest in the state,
 Than thou, the shadow of succession * !
 For, of no right, nor colour like to right,
 He doth fill fields with *barne's* † ; in the realm
 Turns head against the lion's armed jaws,
 And being no more in debt to years, than thou,
 Leads antient lords and reverend bishops on
 To bloody battles and to bruising arms.
 What never-dying honour hath he got,
 Against renowned Dowglas, whose high deeds,
 Whose hot incursions, and great name in arms,
 Hold from all soldiers chief majority,
 And military title capital,
 Through all the kingdoms that acknowledge Christ !
 Thrice hath this Hotspur, Mars in swathing cloaths,
 This infant warrior, in his enterprizes,
 Discomfited great Dowglas ; ta'en him once,
 Enlarged him, and made a friend of him,
 To fill the mouth of deep defiance up,
 And shake the peace and safety of our throne.
 And what say you to this ? Percy, Northumberland,
 Th' Archbishop's Grace of York, Dowglas, and Mortimer,
 Confederate against us, and are up.
 But wherefore do I tell this news to thee ?
 Why, Harry, do I tell thee of my foes,

* That is, worth, and the affections of the people, are stronger pretensions to empire, than hereditary title alone, unsupported by virtue.

† *Barne's*—Armour, or coats of mail.

Which art my nearest * and dearest enemy?
 Thou that art like enough, thro' vassal fear,
 Base inclination, or the start of *spleen* †,
 To fight against me under Percy's pay,
 To dog his heels, and curstie at his frown,
 To shew how much thou art degenerate.

Prince. Do not think so—You shall not find it so—
 And heaven forgive them that so much have swayed
 Your majesty's good thoughts away from me!
 I will redeem all this on Percy's head;
 And in the closing of some glorious day,
 Be bold to tell you, that I am your son;
 When I will wear a garment all of blood,
 And stain my favours in a bloody mask,
 Which washed away, shall scower my shame with it—
 And that shall be the day, when e'er it lights,
 That this same child of honour and renown,
 This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight,
 And your unthought of Harry, chance to meet—
 For every honour sitting on his helm,
 'Would they were multitudes, and on my head
 My shames redoubled! for the time will come,
 That I shall make this northern youth exchange
 His glorious deeds for my indignities.
 Percy is but my factor, good my lord,
 To engross up glorious acts on my behalf;
 And I will call him to so strict account,
 That he shall render every glory up,
 Yea, even the slightest worship of his time,
 Or I will tear the reckoning from his heart.
 This, in the name of heaven, I promise here;
 The which if I perform, and do survive,
 I do beseech your majesty may save
 The long-grown wounds of my intemperance:
 If not, the end of life cancels all bonds;
 And I will die an hundred thousand deaths,
 Ere break the smallest parcel of this vow.

King. An hundred thousand rebels die in this!
 Thou shalt have charge, and sovereign trust herein. . . .
 Our hands are full of business—Let's away;
Advantage feeds him fat, while men delay.

There is hardly a line in the above speech of the King, that is not worth the whole of what Sophocles

* *Dearest*, for most fatal.

† *Spleen*. Shakespeare uses this word in a sense peculiar to himself, for *sudden*, *hasty*, and *rash*—In the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, he applies it to lightning.
 Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
 That in a *spleen* unfolds both heaven and earth.

makes Oedipus say to his son in the same circumstances. But I don't expect that *the learned* will ever give up this point to me, *while one passage remains in Greek, and the other only in English.*

S C E N E I.

The nobleness of Hotspur's character is admirably sustained throughout this Play. The following speech shews a fine part of it :

Hotspur to Dowglas.

Well said, my noble Scot. If speaking truth,
In this fine age, were not thought flattery,
Such attribution should the Dowglas have,
As not a soldier of this season's stamp,
Should go so general current through the world.
By heaven, I cannot flatter, I defy
The tongues of flatters ; but a braver place,
In my heart's love, hath no man than yourself—
Nay, task me to my word ; approve me, lord.

The precarious and critical situation of unwarrantable and hazardous undertakings, is well reflected upon in the following passage of the same Scene, when the conspirators are informed that Northumberland is prevented by sickness from attending the rendez-vous :

Worcester to Hotspur.

But yet I would your father had been here ;
The quality, and *hair* of our attempt
Brooks no *division* * ; it will be thought,
By some that know not why he is away,
That wisdom, loyalty, and meer dislike
Of our proceedings, kept the Earl from hence—
And think how such an apprehension
May turn the tide of fearful faction,
And breed a kind of question in our cause.

* The quality, and *hair* of our attempt,
Brooks no *division*—

The Commentator, by the word *hair*, in this place, understands *complexion* or *character*, and finds fault with the harshness of the metaphor. But I think, from the last part of the sentence, that the Poet meant the expression literally. Worcester compares the slightness of their cause to a single *hair*, which is a thing of too subtle a nature to bear being *divided*.

For well you know, we of the offending side
 Must keep aloof from strict arbitrament,
 And stop all sight-holes, every loop, from whence
 The eye of reason may pry in upon us.
 This absence of your father draws a curtain,
 That shews the ignorant a kind of fear,
 Before not dreamt upon.

The gallant spirit of Hotspur is well shewn in his reply :

You strain too far ;
 I rather of his absence make this use—
 It lends a lustre and more great opinion,
 A larger dare to our great enterprise,
 Than if the earl were here ; for men must think,
 If we, without his help, can make a head
 To push against the kingdom ; with his aid,
 We shall o’erturn it topsy-turvy down.
 Yet all goes well, yet all our joints are whole.

Upon this occasion Dowglas makes a boast, which though intended by him as an exclusive compliment to his own nation, may be challenged as the general characteristic of Great Britain at large.

Dowglas, in continuation of Hotspur’s speech :

As heart can think—there is not such a word
 Spoke of in Scotland, as this term of *fear*.

A C T V. S C E N E I.

Upon a parley or convention, held between the chiefs of the two parties, Worcester enumerates the several grievances of the nation that had induced the Percy family to rise in arms for redress. In reply to these charges, the King gives a very just account of the nature, pretences, and artifices of rebellion.

King. These things, indeed, you have articulated,
 Proclaimed at market-crosses, read in churches,
 To face the garment of rebellion,
 With some fine colour that may please the eye
 Of fickle changelings, and poor discontents,
 Which gape and rub the elbow at the news
 Of hurly-burly innovation.
 And never yet did insurrection want
 Such water-colours to impaint its cause,

Nor

Nor moody beggars, starving for a time
Of pell-mell havock and confusion.

* * *

The liberal mind and brave heart of the Prince of Wales are beautifully marked in the following speech, where he makes a generous encomium on Hotspur, and sends him a spirited defiance to single combat, at the same time.

Prince to Worcester.

In both our armies there is many a soul
Shall pay full dearly for this bold encounter,
If once they join in trial. Tell your nephew,
The Prince of Wales doth join with all the world
In praise of Henry Percy. By my hopes,
This present enterprize set off his head,
I do not think a braver gentleman,
More active-valiant, or more valiant-young,
More daring, or more bold, is now alive,
To grace this latter age with noble deed.
For my part, I may speak it to my shame,
I have a truant been to chivalry;
And so, I hear, he doth account me too.
Yet this, before my father's majesty—
I am content that he shall take the odds
Of his great name and estimation,
And will, to save the blood on either side,
Try fortune with him in a single fight.

S C E N E II.

The arguments of cowardice are whimsically discussed and exposed, in the following passage. The Prince, just as he goes out, says to Falstaff,

Why, thou owest Heaven a death.

Upon which the fat Knight takes occasion to hold this humorous soliloquy with himself :

Falstaff. 'Tis not due, yet—I would be loath to pay him before his day. What need I be so forward with him, that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter; honour pricks me on; but how if honour pricks me off again, when I come on? Can honour set to a leg? No—Or an arm? No—Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? No—What is honour? A word—What is that word Honour? Air—A trim reckoning—

reckoning—Who hath it? He that died on Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No—Doth he hear it? No—Is it insensible then? Yea, to the dead—But will it not live with the living? No—Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore, I'll none of it—Honour is but a meer *scutcheon**, and so ends my catechism.

S C E N E III.

When the King has made the proffer of a general amnesty to the conspirators, the natural distrust and diffidence which rebels must ever labour under, is well descanted upon in this Scene.

Worcester. It is not possible, it cannot be,
The king should keep his word in loving us;
He will suspect us still, and find a time
To punish this offence in other faults.
Suspicion, all our lives, shall be stuck full of eyes;
For treason is but trusted like a fox,
Who ne'er so tame, so cherished, and locked up,
Will have a wild trick of his ancestors.
Look how we can, or sad, or merrily,
Interpretation will misquote our looks;
And we shall feed like oxen at a stall,
The better cherished, still the nearer death.

If the Reader will take the trouble to revert to the last observation on the fourth Scene in the First Act of this Play, he will meet with a like reflection there, made by the same person. This repetition is a stroke of Nature given us by the Poet, to shew the perturbation of spirits, and distrust of mind, which persons in his situation are ever sensible of. But, indeed, this reflection may more generally be applied to every species of vice; for in guilt there can be no peace within, nor confidence without.

S C E N E IX.

The magnanimity of the Prince of Wales is preserved throughout his character. After he has slain Hotspur, he makes his elegy in these words:

Prince. Brave Percy—Fare thee well, great heart!
Ill-weaved ambition †, how much art thou shrunk!

* The *batchment*, placed over the door of a person deceased.

† A metaphor taken from cloth, which *shrinks* when it is woven with too loose a texture. Johnson.

When that this body did contain a spirit,
 A kingdom for it was too small a bound ;
 But now two paces of the vilest earth,
 Is room enough. 'This earth, that bears thee dead,
 Bears not alive so stout a gentleman—
 If thou wert sensible of courtesy,
 I should not make so great a shew of zeal—
 But let my favour hide thy mangled form,
 And, even in thy behalf, I thank myself,
 For doing these fair rites of tenderness.

[*Throwing his scarf over him.*]

Adieu, and take thy praise with thee to heaven ;
 Thy ignominy sleep with thee in the grave,
 But not remembered in thy epitaph.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I thought that my task was done with this Play, when I had got to the end of it ; but there is something so very great, singular, and attractive, in the two principal characters of this historic piece, that I find a pleasure in keeping them still in view, and contemplating them both in my mind.

Whenever Hotspur or the Prince *filled the Scene*, which they are either of them, singly, sufficient to do, I confess that my heart was sensible of such an emotion, as Sir Philip Sidney said he used to be affected with, on a perusal of the old Ballad of Chevy-Chase ; *as if he had heard the sound of a trumpet*. Perhaps the following observation may better account for my impulse :

Women are apt to esteem the *antient virtue* of courage at an higher rate than men in general are ; and this, for these two especial reasons. The first, that it is peculiarly necessary to their personal defence ; and the next, that their weakness induces them to form a sublimer notion of this quality, than the stronger, and therefore braver, sex may naturally be supposed to compliment it with. Men, feeling the principles of it in their own breasts, conceive no very supernatural idea of it ; while
 women,

women, having no such premisses to reason from, look on it as something more than human.

These reflections, with the frequent occasions I have had, throughout this Play, of comparing the two heroes of it with each other, have tempted me to undertake a Parallel between them, after the manner of Plutarch; which, however, I did not mean to have given the Reader, as hinted above, 'till I should come to the end of the second Play after this, where our Author has concluded all he had to say about Henry the Fifth.

But as Shakespeare has opened enough of this Prince's character, here, to supply sufficient materials for the comparison, and that his unfortunate rival is just slain, I thought the Parallel might have a better effect on the mind of my Readers, in this place, than it would be likely to produce after the delay had suffered the impression of Hotspur's qualities to wear out of their remembrance.

A P A R A L L E L

B E T W E E N

HOTSPUR, AND HENRY PRINCE OF WALES.

THEY are both equally brave; but the courage of Hotspur has a greater portion of fierceness in it—The Prince's magnanimity is more heroic. The first resembles Achilles; the latter is more like Hector. The different principles, too, of their actions help to form and justify this distinction; as the one *invades*, and the other *defends*, a right. Hotspur speaks nobly of his rival Dowglas, to his face, but after he is become his friend; the Prince does the same of Hotspur, behind his back, and while he is still his enemy.

They both of them possess a sportive vein of humour in their scenes of common life; but Hotspur still preserves the surly and refractory haughtiness of his character, throughout, even in the relaxa-

tions he indulges himself in. The Prince has more of ease and nature in his ; delivering himself over to mirth and dissipation, without reserve. Hotspur's festivity seems to resemble that of Hamlet ; as assumed merely to relieve anxiety of mind, and cover sanguinary purposes ; the Prince's gaiety, like that of Faulconbridge *, appears to be more genuine, arising from natural temper, and an healthful flow of spirits. The Prince is Alcibiades—Percy is—himself.

There is likewise another character in this rich Play, of a most peculiar distinction ; as being not only *original*, but *inimitable*, also—No copy of it has ever since appeared, either in life or description. Any one of the Dramatis Personæ in Congreve's Comedies, or, indeed, in most of the modern ones, might repeat the wit or humour of the separate parts, with equal effect on the audience, as the person to whose rôle they are appropriated ; but there is a certain characteristic peculiarity in all the humour of Falstaff, that would sound flatly in the mouths of Bardolph, Poins, or Peto. In fine, the portrait of this extraordinary personage is delineated by so masterly a hand, that we may venture to pronounce it to be the only one that ever afforded so high a degree of pleasure, without the least pretence to merit or virtue to support it.

I was obliged to pass by many of his strokes of humour, character, and description, because they did not fall within the rule I had prescribed to myself in these notes ; but I honestly confess that it was with regret, whenever I did so ; for, were there as much moral, as there certainly is physical, good in laughing, I might have transcribed every Scene of his, throughout this, the following Play, and the Merry Wives of Windsor, for the advantage of the health, as well as the entertainment, of my readers.

* In King John.

HENRY the FOURTH.

S E C O N D P A R T .

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

THE KING.

PRINCE OF WALES.

PRINCE JOHN OF LANCASTER.

HUMPHREY OF GLOUCESTER.

THOMAS OF CLARENCE.

EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

LORD BARDOLPH.

MORTON.

EARL OF WARWICK.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

BARDOLPH.

POINS.

PISTOL.

} Against the King.

} For the King.

W O M E N.

LADY PERCY, Widow of Hotspur.

DOLL TEAR-SHEET.

HENRY the FOURTH.

SECOND PART.

A C T I. S C E N E III.

THE quick eye of suspicion, with the prophetic nature of anxious apprehensions, are well marked here. The latter is a species of that kind of foreboding, often unaccountably arising in the mind, which I have taken notice of in former places*.

Northumberland, *Lord Bardolph, and Morton.*

Morton, giving an account of the action at Shrewsbury, says to Northumberland,

Dowglas is living, and your brother, yet ;
But for my lord, your son —

Here Northumberland hastily interrupts him :

Why, he is dead—
See what a ready tongue suspicion hath.
He that but fears the thing he would not know,
Hath, by instinct, knowledge from other's eyes,
That what he feared is chanced.

Bardolph. Yet for all this, say not that Percy's dead.

Northumberland to Morton.

I see a strange confession in thine eye ;
Thou shak'st thy head, and hold'st it fear or sin,
To speak a truth. If he be slain, say so.
The tongue offends not, that reports his death ;
And he doth sin that doth belie the dead,
Not he that saith the dead is not alive.

Morton. Yet the first bringer of unwelcome news
Hath but a losing office, and his tongue

* Richard II. Act II. Scene V. and Merchant of Venice, Act I. Scene I.
First remark.

Sounds, ever after, as a fullen bell,
Remembered tolling a departed † friend.

I was just going to observe upon the latter part of this dialogue, when I happened to recollect that I had already taken notice of a parallel passage, in my second remark on the First Scene of the Third Act of King John, and to which I beg leave to refer my Reader.

* * *

The human mind, when roused by danger, or inflamed with passion, is capable of inspiring the brave heart with additional courage, and of supplying new vigour to exhausted strength. This admirable œconomy in the human frame is contrived by nature, as being necessary to self-defence, as well as in order to render injury the more difficult and hazardous to the offender.

Northumberland. For this I shall have time enough to mourn ;
In poison there is physic ; and this news,
That would, had I been well, have made me sick,
Being sick, hath, in some measure, made me well.
And as the wretch, whose fever-weakened joints,
Like strengthless hinges, buckle under life,
Impatient of his fit, breaks, like a fire,
Out of his keeper's arms ; even so my limbs,
Weakened with grief, being now enraged with grief,
Are thrice themselves. Hence, therefore, thou nice crutch !
A scaly gauntlet, now, with joints of steel,
Must glove this hand—And hence, thou sickly quoif !
Thou art a guard too wanton * for the head,
Which princes flushed with conquest, aim to hit.
Now bind my brows with iron, and approach
The rugged'st hour that time and spite dare bring,
To frown upon the enraged Northumberland !
Let heaven kiss earth ! now let not Nature's hand
Keep the wild flood confined ; let order die,
And let this world no longer be a stage,
To feed contention in a lingering act,
But let one spirit of the first-born Cain
Reign in all bosoms ; that each heart being set
On bloody courses, the rude scene may end.
And darkness be the burier of the dead !

† The word in the Text is *departing*.

* *Slight* or *effeminate*.

I have continued this speech, for eight lines further than my preface to it required; but I thought the whole spirit and language of it too fine, to suffer it to be mangled by stopping short. Besides, this latter part of it shews that extravagance of despair and rage to which grief, repentment, and misfortune are apt to drive a person, whose mind is not happily tempered by philosophy, or restrained by religion.

* * *

See the second remark, with the passage it refers to, in the First Scene of Act the Fourth of the preceding Play, as it will save me the trouble of making a new observation here, or of repeating the same again, as applicable to the following speech :

Morton. My lord, your son had only but the corpse,
But shadows, and the shews of men to fight;
For that same word, *Rebellion*, did divide
The action of their bodies from their souls,
And they did fight with queasiness constrained,
As men drink potions; that their weapons only
Seemed on our side; but for their spirits and souls,
This word, *Rebellion*, it had froze them up,
As fish are in a pond.

S C E N E VI.

There is a most disgusting picture, but a too historically just one, given, in this place, of the unstable and fluctuating affections of the multitude—No popularity can be permanent, which is not earned by virtue, and preserved by perseverance in it. The Public is a Weather-Cock; it continues steady only while the wind remains so; when that shifts, the *vane* turns also.

York. Let us on;
And publish the occasion of our arms.
The Common-wealth is sick of their own choice;
Their over-greedy love hath surfeited,
An habitation giddy and unsure
Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart.
O, thou fond Many! with what loud applause

Didst

Did'st thou beat heaven with blessing Bolinbroke,
 Before he was what thou would'st have him be ?
 And now, being trimmed up in thine own desires,
 Thou, beastly feeder, art so full of him,
 That thou provokest thyself to cast him up.
 So, so, thou common dog, didst thou disgorge
 Thy glutton bosom of the royal Richard ;
 And now thou wouldst eat thy dead vomit up,
 And howl'st to find it. What trust is in these times !
 They that, when Richard lived, would have him die,
 Are now become enamoured of his grave ;
 Thou that threw dust upon his goodly head,
 When through proud London he came fighting on,
 After the admired heels of Bolinbroke,
 Crie'st now, O earth, yield us that king again,
 And take thou this. O thoughts of men accurst !
Past and to come seem best ; things present worst.

ACT II. SCENE IV.

The extravagant and superstitious notions of the vulgar, in former times, with regard to kings and heroes, though not really supposed in this Scene, are, however, very humorously ridiculed in it.

The Prince and Poins.

Prince. Trust me, I am exceeding weary.

Poins. And is it come to that ? I had thought that weariness durst not have attacked one of so high blood.

Prince. It doth me, though it discolours the complexion of my greatness to acknowledge it. Doth it not shew vilely in me, now, to desire small beer ?

Poins. Why, a Prince should not be so loosely studied, as to remember so weak a composition.

Prince. Belike then, my appetite was not princely got ; for, in troth, I do now remember the poor creature, small beer. But, indeed, these humble considerations make me out of love with my greatness. What a disgrace is it in me, now, to remember thy name ? or to know thy face, to-morrow ? or to take note how many pair of silk stockings thou hast ? *Videlicet* ; these, and those that were once the peach-coloured ones—or to bear the inventory of thy shirts ; as one for use, and another for superfluity.

*

*

*

That common disposition of vaunting ourselves above others, so natural to mankind, that some writer
 styles

stiles it *a mint at every one's tongue's end, to coin their own praise*, is well marked in the latter part of this Scene. But I shall commence the dialogue a little earlier than may be just necessary to this reference, in order to treat my reader with a beautiful trait in the Prince's character, who is made to preserve his virtue untainted, in the midst of all his debauchery and dissipation.

Poins, being piqued at the Prince's having exposed the shabbiness of his wardrobe, replies :

Poins. How ill it follows, after you have laboured so hard, you should talk so idly ? Tell me how many good young princes would do so, their fathers lying so sick as yours at this time is ?

Prince. Shall I tell thee one thing, Poins ?

Poins. Yes, and let it be an excellent good thing.

Prince. It shall serve among wits of no higher breeding than thine.

Poins. Go to ; I stand the push of your one thing that you'll tell.

Prince. Why, I tell thee, it is not meet that I should be sad, now my father is sick ; albeit, I could tell thee, as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better to call my friend, I could be sad, and very sad, indeed, too.

Poins. Very hardly, upon such a subject.

Prince. By this hand, thou think'st me as far in the Devil's book as thou and Falstaff, for obduracy and persistency. Let the end try the man. But, I tell thee, my heart bleeds inwardly, that my father is so sick ; and keeping such vile company as thou art, hath in reason taken from me all ostentation of sorrow.

Poins. The reason ?

Prince. What would'st thou think of me, if I should weep ?

Poins. I would think thee a most princely hypocrite.

Prince. It would be every man's thought ; and thou art a blessed fellow, to think as every man thinks. Never a man's thought in the world, keeps the road-way better than thine. Every man would think me an hypocrite, indeed. And what excites your most worshipful thought to think so ?

Poins. Why, because you have seemed so lewd, and so much ingrafted to Falstaff.

Prince. And to thee.

Poins. Nay, by this light, I am well spoken of ; I can hear it with my own ears. The worst they can say of me, is, that I am
a second

a second brother, and that I am *a proper fellow of my hands* * ; and those two things, I confess, I cannot help.

The delicacy of the Prince's difficulty upon this occasion, in not being able to manifest the concern he was really sensible of for his father's illness, left, from the former complexion of his life and manners, he might be suspected of insincerity in such professions, must have a fine effect on the sentiment of a reader who is possessed of the least refinement of principle or virtue.

A most useful lesson might be framed, upon the very singular character of this amiable person. The pattern is not perfect ; and therefore—shall I venture to say it ? the example is the better, for that reason. His manners are idle, but his morals uncorrupt. He suffers Falstaff to make as free with him as he pleases, but breaks his head, as Mrs. Quickly tells us in a former Scene, for his having thrown out a jest upon his father. Young men may learn from him never to be guilty of more vice, than the temptation to it might precipitate them into. He connives at the robbery of his companions, for the diversion of playing the same game upon them, again ; but resolves to make ample restitution for the wrong †. He offends his father by the dissoluteness of his conduct ; but his filial affection and respect are still unremitted towards him. He shews a spirit of justice in injustice, and of duty, even in disobedience.

I here offer this comment as a supplement to the character I have already drawn of this Prince, at the end of the former Play. I could not have fairly added it there, as any thing that did not immediately relate to the comparison between him and Hotspur, would have been improperly introduced in the Parallel.

* This was an expression, in those times, for *a person forward in fighting*.

† See the last Scene of Act II. in the first part of this Play.

SCENE V.

The vanity with which men are apt to plume themselves, with regard to titles of honour to which they can claim no merit, in themselves, is humorously ridiculed here by Poins, in his notes on Falstaff's letter to the Prince, which is given him to read.

Poins, *reading*.

John Falstaff, Knight. Every man must know that, as often as he hath occasion to name himself; even like those that are a-kin to the king, for they never prick their finger, but they cry, *there is some of the king's blood spilt—How comes that?* says he that takes upon him not to conceive it. The answer is as ready, as a borrower's cap*—*I am the king's poor cousin, Sir.*

Prince. Nay, they will be a-kin to us, or they will fetch it from *Jabber*,

SCENE VI.

The servile adulation usually paid to great or distinguished persons, even to an imitation of their very defects, and which Alexander properly reprehended, by giving a box on the ear to one of his courtiers who had mimicked the wryness of his neck, is well represented here:

Lady Percy, speaking of Hotspur,

He was, indeed, the glass,
Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves.
He had no legs, that practised not his gait;
And speaking thick † which nature made his blemish,
Became the accents of the would-be valiant;
For those that could speak low and tardily,
Would turn their own perfection to abuse,
To seem like him. So that, in speech, and gait,
In diet, in affections of delight,
In military rules, humours of blood,
He was the mark, and glass, copy and book,
That fashioned others.

* Always *cap in hand* to his creditor.

† Might we not venture to substitute the word *quick*, in this passage, as being better opposed to the description in the second line following of *low and tardily*—Those who speak *quick*, generally speak *loud* also; which compleats the opposition.

In the last passage of this Scene, the uncertain and irresolute deliberation of mind, in which men are apt to be held in suspense, upon the crisis of doubtful adventures, is well described by an apt simile.

Northumberland. 'Tis with my mind,
As with the tide swelled up unto its height,
That makes a still stand, running neither way.
Fain would I go to meet the archbishop *,
But many thousand reasons hold me back.
I will resolve for Scotland; there am I,
Till time and 'vantage crave my company.

S C E N E X.

In this Scene, Doll makes a speech that is worthy to be remarked upon. When Pistol is stiled *captain*, she says,

Captain! thou abominable damned cheater, art thou not ashamed to be called captain? If captains were of my mind, they would truncheon you out of taking their names upon you, before you have earned them. A captain! these villains will make the word captain odious—therefore captains had need look to it.

There is a punctilio of the kind hinted at here, already established in the Army; but it is confined only to one article, namely courage. If an officer declines a challenge, or suffers an affront to pass unrepented, his corps refuse *to roll* with him. It would be better, if this point of honour respected the *moral* as well as the *natural* part of a soldier's character; and better still, if the same spirit and virtue were exerted in every class or distinction of life; among lords, commoners, lawyers, parsons, and physicians. A rule of this sort would go further towards the reformation of manners, than all the laws and preachments that ever were made.

S C E N E XI.

The slight merits and superficial accomplishments which too often connect young persons in fellowship with each other, are here well exposed. When For-

* York, then up in arms on his side.

tune is whirling her wheel about, the turning of a tobacco-stopper, or of a straw, may *make a man*, according to Trinculo's expression*.

Falstaff, *and* Doll Tear-sheet.

Doll. Sirrah, what humour is the prince of ?

Falstaff. A good shallow young fellow ; he would have made a good pantler ; he would have chipped bread well.

Doll. They say Poinc has a good wit.

Falstaff. He a good wit ? hang him, baboon ! His wit is as thick as Tewksbury mustard. There is no more conceit in him than is in a mallet.

Doll. Why does the prince love him so, then ?

Falstaff. Because their legs are both of a bigness, and he plays at quoits well, and eats conger and fennel † ; and drinks off candles ends for flap-dragons ‡, and rides the wild mare with the boys, and jumps over joint stools, and swears with a good grace, and wears his boot very smooth, like the sign of the leg, and breeds no bate with telling of indiscreet stories ; and such other gambol faculties he hath, that shew a weak mind, and an able body ; for the which the prince admits him, for he is himself such another ; the weight of an hair would turn the scales between their *avoir-du-jois*.

ACT III. SCENE I.

In the fine speech which fills this Scene, the anxieties of the *great*, with the content of the *commonalty*, the difference between the labour of the mind, and that of the body, are beautifully contrasted, and most poetically compared.

The King alone in his night-gown.

How many thousands of my poorest subjects
Are at this hour asleep ! O gentle sleep,
Nature's soft nurse ! how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,

* In the Tempest.

† As I know of no story that this circumstance can be applied to, it may be supposed to allude to the particular taste (for 'tis far from a general one) of the Prince, which Poinc might have adopted ; as lady Percy says, the flatterers of Hotspur affected him even in *his diet*. From which hint I should think, that a *fennel-eater* would be a better expression for *sawners*, than *toad eater*, because the authority of the phrase is better, as being vouched by this passage.

‡ This article I can only explain by another boyish trick, called *making fire-ships*. An almond is lighted, put into a glass of any liquor, and swallowed down before the flame is extinguished.

And

And sleep my senses in forgetfulness?
 Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
 Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
 And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
 Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
 Under the canopies of costly state,
 And lulled with sounds of sweetest melody?
 O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile,
 In loathsome beds, and leav'st the kingly couch
 A watch-case *, or a common larum-bell?
 Wilt thou, upon the high and giddy mast,
 Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains,
 In cradle of the rude imperious surge;
 And in the visitation of the winds,
 Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
 Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
 With deaf'ning clamours in the slippery shrouds,
 That with the hurley death itself awakes?
 Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude?
 And in the calmest and the stillest night,
 With all appliances, and means to boot,
 Deny it to a king? Then, happy, lowly clown,
 Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

S C E N E II.

There is a sad, because a too true, prospect of human life, presented to us here, which justifies the goodness of Providence,

"And vindicates the ways of God to man,"
 in hiding the future from our view. *Quid sit futurum cras, fuge querere*.—All the knowledge that is necessary to true wisdom, the intire volume of morality and devotion lies open before us; the contingencies of events only, of little import, upon the whole of our existence, being veiled from our sight.

"Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate,
 "All but the page prescrib'd, their *present state*;
 "From brutes what men, from men what spirits know,
 "Or who could *suffer being* here below?"

Pope's Essay on Man.

Were we capable of foreseeing effects in their causes, and admitted to peer through the *telescope* of

* A sentry-box, to which was fixed an alarm bell, that the sentinel was to ring, in order to give notice of any attack on his post.

time,

time, it would more frequently and generally make us unhappy before our sufferings ; would render the future and precarious evil present and certain ; dull the sense of anticipated good, by giving us enjoyment before possession ; hope, the enhancer of expected bliss, would be lost in assurance ; and that dear cordial of despair be then struck off from the *materia medica* of affliction.

Cicero speaks finely upon this subject. I forget the place ; but 'tis where he supposes Priam, Pompey, and Cæsar, to have had their several pages in the book of Fate laid open before them, in the height of their prosperity.

The King, Warwick, and Surry.

King. Oh Heaven, that one might read the book of Fate,
 And see the revolution of the times,
 Make mountains level, and the continent,
 Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
 Into the sea ; and, other times, to see
 The beachy girdle of the ocean
 Too wide for Neptune's hips ! How chances mock,
 And changes fill the cup of alteration
 With divers liquors ! O, if this were seen,
 The happiest youth, viewing his progress through,
 What perils *pressed* *, what crosses to ensue,
 Would shut the book, and sit him down and die.—
 'Tis not ten years gone,
 Since Richard and Northumberland, great friends,
 Did feast together ; and in two years after
 Were they at wars. It is but eight years since
 This Percy was the man nearest my soul,
 Who like a brother toiled in my affairs,
 And laid his love and life under my foot ;
 Yea, for my sake, even to the eyes of Richard,
 Gave him defiance. But which of you was ?
 You, cousin Nevil, as I may remember, [*To Warwick.*
 When Richard, with his eye brimful of tears †,
 Then checked and rated by Northumberland,

* The word is *past*, in the text ; about which the Commentators raise a difficulty, but don't remove it. I hope that this mere verbal alteration will obviate the objection ; and supposing it to have been spelt *press*, in the original manuscript, the transcriber might easily have made the mistake.

† This line is very affecting. Shakespeare's humanity prompted him to make this unfortunate prince appear an object of compassion, even where he is not exhibited in the scene, by describing a circumstance that was no otherwise necessary to this passage.

Did speak these words, now proved a prophecy :
 “ Northumberland, *thou ladder, by the which*
 “ *My cousin Bolinbroke ascends my throne ;*”
 Though then, Heaven knows, I had no such intent,
 But that necessity so bowed the state,
 That I and greatness were compelled to kifs * ;
 “ *The time will come,*” thus did he follow it,
 “ *The time will come, that, foul sin gathering head,*
 “ *Shall break into corruption ;*” so went on,
 Foretelling this same time’s condition,
 And the division of our amity.

However, the reply to this reflection says, very justly, That, in many cases, the ignorance of the future may be often supplied by those who have made proper observations on past experience, and are capable of forming judgments upon character.

Warwick. There is an history in all men’s lives,
 Figuring the nature of the times deceased ;
 The which observed, a man may prophecy,
 With a near aim, of the main chance of things,
 As not yet come to life, which in their seeds,
 And weak beginnings, lie intreaured.
 Such things become the hatch and brood of time ;
 And by the necessary form of them,
 King *Richard* might create a perfect guess,
 That great *Northumberland*, then false to him,
 Would of that seed grow to a greater falseness,
 Which should not find a ground to root upon,
 Unless on you.

SCENE III.

The usual prate, or, as Hotspur phrases it, *the bald unjointed chat* of old fellows among their cotemporaries, the fond and vain boastings of their youthful frolics, and their trite reflections, intermixed, at the same time, with a particular attention to their own interests, are all most excellently well displayed in this Scene, which I have a double purpose in laying before the Reader ; to warn the old from rendering themselves tedious or ridiculous by such foibles ; and also to incline the young to shew some tenderness to natural weaknesses, arising not from the peculia-

* This is sometimes the case, but always the pretence for usurpation.

rities of the persons, being characteristical only of respectful years, and *time-honoured* age†.

Shallow and Silence, two Justices, meeting.

Shallow. Come on, come on, come on; give me your hand, Sir; an early stirrer, by the rood*. And how doth my good cousin *Silence*?

Silence. Good morrow, good cousin *Shallow*.

Shallow. And how doth my cousin, your bed-fellow? and your fairest daughter, and mine, my god-daughter *Ellen*?

Silence. Alas, a black *ousel* †, cousin *Shallow*.

Shallow. By yea and nay, Sir, I dare say my cousin *William* is become a good scholar. He is at Oxford still, is he not?

Silence. Indeed, Sir, to my cost.

Shallow. He must then to the *Inns of Court* shortly. I was once of *Clement's Inn*; where, I think, they will talk of mad *Shallow* yet.

Silence. You were called *lusty* *Shallow* then, cousin.

Shallow. I was called any thing, and I would have done any thing, indeed, too, and roundly too. There was I, and little *John Doit*, of *Staffordshire*, and black *George Barc*, and *Francis Pickbone*, and *Will. Squele*, a *Cotswold man*; you had not four such swinge-bucklers || in all the *Inns of Court*, again; and I may say to you, we knew where the *bona-roba's* were, and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was *Jack Falstaff*, now *Sir John*, a boy, and page to *Thomas Morwbray*, duke of *Norfolk*.

Silence. This *Sir John*, cousin, that comes hither, anon, about soldiers?

Shallow. The same *Sir John*, the very same. I saw him break *Schoggan's* head at the court gate, when he was a crack, not thus high; and the very same day did I fight with one *Sampson Stockfish*, a fruiterer, behind *Gray's Inn*. O the mad days that I have spent! And to see how many of my old acquaintance are dead!

† This is an epithet of Shakespeare's own framing. *Richard II.* Act I. Scene I.

* The cross.

† *Ousel* is a black-bird; but why he calls her so, I can't tell; unless it be in opposition to *Shallow's* complimenting her with the epithet of *fair*.

|| *Swinge-buckler*. This is the only place where we meet with this epithet for a rioter or bully, or, indeed, for any thing else; in all other authors, before or since that æra, the word used for this purpose is *swash-buckler*: and properly so; for the first part of the compound, where the character lies, is fully described by the expression of *swash*, upon Shakespeare's own authority, having severally applied it in such a sense in other places; to *swash*, a *swasher*, for to *swagger*, a *swaggerer*—but *swinge*, so far from supplying the meaning here intended, conveys no sort of idea at all, that I can conceive. The expression of *swash-buckler* is made use of, applied to the Prince of Wales, by Hotspur, in the fourth Scene of Act I. first part of this Play.

Silence. We shall all follow, cousin.

Shallow. Certain, 'tis certain, very sure, very sure. Death, as the Psalmist says, is certain to all ; all shall die. How go a good yoke of bullocks, at *Stamford* fair ?

Silence. Truly, cousin, I was not there.

Shallow. Death is certain. Is old Double, of your town, living yet ?

Silence. Dead, Sir.

Shallow. Dead !—See, see—He drew a good bow—And dead ? He shot a fine shoot. *John of Gaunt* loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead !—He would have clapt in the clowt at twelve score, and carried you a fore-hand shaft, a fourteen and fourteen and a half †, that it would have done a man's heart good to see—How a score of ewes, now ?

Silence. Thereafter as they be. A score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

Shallow. And is old Double dead !

SCENE IV.

The ridicule, in the following passage, is directed against the affectation of using what the vulgar call *hard words*, in familiar conversation, with the synonymous explications of ignorance, by throwing the same word into different tenses or cases, as if the sense of it could be hit off, by the repetition of its own sound.

Bardolph and Shallow.

Bardolph. My captain, Sir, commends him to you ; my captain, Sir *John Falstaff*, a tall gentleman, by Heaven ! and a most gallant leader.

Shallow. He greets me well, Sir, I knew him a good back-sword man. How doth the good knight ? May I ask how my good lady, his wife, doth ?

Bardolph. Sir, pardon ; a soldier is better accommodated than with a wife.

Shallow. It is well said, Sir ; and it is well said, indeed, too—*better accommodated*—It is good, yea, indeed, is it—Good phrases surely are, and ever were, very commendable. *Accommodated*—It comes of *accommodate*—very good, a good phrase.

Bardolph. Pardon me, Sir ; I have heard the word. *Phrase* call you it ? By this day, I know not the *phrase* ; but I will maintain the word with my sword, to be a soldier-like word, and a word of ex-

† Terms of art, in the exercise of the bow and arrow, not worth explaining.

ceeding

ceeding good command. *Accommodated*—that is, when a man is, as they say, *accommodated*; or when a man is, being whereby he may be thought to be *accommodated*, which is an excellent thing.

ACT IV. SCENE VIII.

There is a striking description given of the Prince, here, which does honour likewise to the speaker. Parents, in general, while they are fond of their children, are apt either to see them without blemish, or, when they are offended with them, to shew no indulgence to their failings. But the good old king speaks here impartially of his son, fairly balancing his merits with his blames, and weighing them with the charity that Heaven itself will do hereafter.

The King, Duke of Clarence, and Warwick.

King. Thomas of Clarence,
How chance thou art not with the prince thy brother?
He loves thee, and thou dost neglect him, *Thomas*,
Thou hast a better place in his affection,
Than all thy brothers; cherish it, my boy;
And noble offices thou may'st effect
Of mediation, after I am dead,
Between his greatness and thy other brethren.
Therefore omit him not; blunt not his love,
Nor lose the good advantage of his grace,
By seeming cold, or careless of his will;
For he is gracious, if he be observed.
He hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity;
Yet, notwithstanding, being incensed, he's flint;
As humorous as winter, and as sudden
As flaws * congealed in the spring of day;
His temper, therefore, must be well observed.
Chide him for faults, but do it reverently,
When you perceive his blood inclined to mirth;
But being moody, give him line and scope,
'Till that his passions, like a whale on ground,
Confound themselves with working. Learn this, *Thomas*,
And thou shalt prove a shelter to thy friends,
A hoop of gold to bind thy brothers in,
That the united vessel of their blood,

* Air congealed by the coldness of the night, and exploded in gusts by the warmth of the morning sun.

Mingled with venom of suggestion,
 As force-perforce the age will pour it in,
 Shall never leak, though it should work as strong
 As *aconitum*, or rash gunpowder.

One cannot help loving such a character, taking the whole together. The good part of it is its *nature*, the bad one but its *youth*. Fruits of a wild flavour are the choicest, when well cultivated.

In part of the above speech, there is a good direction given to those who have to deal with passionate or capricious persons, *Chide him for faults*, &c.

I should have expatiated on the unanimity of the royal family, recommended here, as necessary to the safety of the crown; but that I could not possibly have urged any new argument on the subject, stronger than the old simile of the *bundle of twigs* in the Fable.

Just after, the king speaks again of the prince, with the same tenderness, and in a most affecting manner, upon hearing that he still continues to associate with his loose companions:

King. Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds;
 And he, the noble image of my youth,
 Is overspread with them; therefore my grief
 Stretches itself beyond the hour of death.

In answer to this melancholy prospect, Warwick endeavours to make an apology for the prince, in a very pretty and ingenious allusion, wherein is implied, what happens to have too much truth in it, that no one can know the world, or be fit to govern in it, who is not sufficiently acquainted with the base and corrupt part of mankind.

Warwick. My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite;
 The prince but studies his companions,
 Like a strange tongue, wherein to gain the language,
 'Tis needful that the most immodest word
 Be looked upon and learned; which once attained,
 Your highness knows comes to no farther use,
 But to be known, and hated. So, like gross terms,
 The prince will, in the perfectness of time,
 Cast off his followers; and their memory

Shall

Shall, as a pattern, or a measure, live,
By which his grace must mete the lives of others ;
Turning past evils to advantages.

To this piece of soothing flattery the king replies, with as apt a simile, on his part, to express his diffidence in the hopeful prophecy :

King. 'Tis seldom when the bee forsakes her comb
In the dead carrion.

Intimating that our affections, like the honeycomb, however improperly placed at first, will too naturally continue still to attract us, even in spite of our better reason. The simile here made use of, tho' it may appear somewhat too coarse, at first thought, will quickly be found to contain a very poetical beauty in it, upon recollecting the episode of *Aristæus*, at the end of the *Fourth Georgic* ; where the miraculous generation of bees, from the putrid carcase of an ox, is related by Virgil ; and to which this image may be looked upon as an allusion.

S C E N E IX.

There is a reflection made here upon the unsatisfactory or perverse state of things, in this life, which will have double its effect, as being delivered from that so much *falsely envied state*, a throne.

Upon hearing that the rebels had been overthrown, the king says,

And wherefore should these good news make me sick ?
Will fortune never come with both hands full,
But write her fair words still in foulest letters ?
She either gives a stomach, and no food ;
Such are the poor in health : or else a feast,
And takes away the stomach ; such the rich,
Who have abundance, and enjoy it not.

S C E N E X.

The prince sitting by his dying father, in a slumber, with the crown lying by him, lays open the scene, and exposes to view the real, or, as it may more properly be expressed, *the private state of greatness*, in the following soliloquy :

R 4

Prince.

Prince. Why doth the crown lye there upon his pillow,
 Being so troublesome a bedfellow ?
 O polished perturbation ! golden care !
 That keeps the ports of slumber open wide,
 To many a watchful night. Sleep with it, now,
 Yet not so sound, and half so deeply sweet,
 As he whose brow with homely biggen bound,
 Snores out the watch of night. O majesty !
 When thou dost pinch thy bearer, thou dost sit
 Like a rich armour worn in heat of day,
 That scalds with safety. By his gates of breath
 There lies a downy feather, which stirs not—
 Did he suspire, that light and weightless down
 Perforce must move—My gracious lord ! my father !
 —This sleep is sound, indeed ; this is a sleep,
 That from the golden *rigol* * hath divorced
 So many English kings. Thy due from me
 Is tears, and heavy sorrows of the blood ;
 Which nature, love, and filial tendernefs,
 Shall, O my father ! pay thee plenteously.

I have continued this speech further than was merely necessary to the purpose for which it was introduced, because I am fond of exhibiting my hero in the best lights of his character.

ACT V. SCENE I.

There are some good observations made here, on the powerful effects of the company we associate with, over both our minds and manners ; and the truth is not the less serious, or worthy of attention, for being humorously urged, or ridiculously expressed.

Falstaff, on Shallow's going out,

If I were sawed into quantities, I should make four dozen of such bearded hermit-slaves, as master *Shallow*. It is a wonderful thing to see the semblable coherence of his men's spirits and his.—They, by observing of him, do bear themselves like foolish justices ; he, by conversing with them, is turned into a justice-like serving-man. Their spirits are so married in conjunction, with the participation of society, that they flock together, in consent, like so many wild geese. If I had a suit to master *Shallow*, I would humour his men with the imputation of being near their master ; if to his men, I would curry with master *Shallow*, that no man could better com-

* *Rigol*, a circle, in its common sense. Here 'tis put for a *diadem*.

mand his servants. It is certain, that either wise bearing, or ignorant carriage, is caught as men take diseases, one of another; therefore, *let men take heed of their company*. I will devise matter enough out of this *Shallow*, to keep prince *Henry* in continual laughter, the wearing out of six fashions; which is four terms, or two *actions* *; and he shall laugh without *intervallums* †. O, it is much, that a lie with a slight oath, and a jest with a sad ‡ brow, will do with a fellow that never had the ach in his shoulders. O, you shall see him laugh, till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up.

S C E N E II.

The following passage, though long, will not be found tedious; and is so full of excellent matter for observation, that it would be unpardonable to shorten it. The particulars worthy of notice in it, are already so strongly marked by the principal speakers themselves, that it would be an useless and impertinent labour in me, to point them out to the Reader.

The prince of Wales, now king, with the dukes of Lancaster, Gloucester, Clarence, and the Lord Chief Justice.

Chief Justice. Heaven save your majesty!

Henry. This new and gorgeous garment, majesty,
Sits not so easy on me, as you think.
Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear—
This is the *English*, not the *Turkish* court ||—
Not *Amurath* an *Amurath* succeeds,
But *Harry*, *Harry*—Yet be sad, good brothers,
For, to speak truth, it very well becomes ye;
Sorrow so royally in you appears,
That I will deeply put the fashion on,
And wear it in my heart. Why then be sad;
But entertain no more of it, good brothers,
Than a joint burden laid upon us all.
For me, by Heaven, I bid you be assured,
I'll be your father, and your brother too;
Let me but bear your love, I'll bear your cares.
Yet weep that *Harry's* dead? Well, so will I;
But *Harry* lives, that shall convert those tears
By number into hours of happiness.

* The humour here lies in calculating the time of a spendthrift, by law terms, or *actions* for debt. *Johnson*.

† The vacations between the *Terms*.

‡ *Sad*, for *serious*.

|| The sultan puts all his brothers to death when he mounts the throne. 'Tis said so, at least,

The Brothers. We hope no other from your majesty.

Henry. You all look strangely on me; and you most,
Who are, I think, assured I love you not. [*To the Chief Justice.*]

Chief Justice. I am assured, if I be measured rightly,
Your majesty hath no just cause to hate me.

Henry. No! might a prince of my great hopes, forget
So great indignities you laid upon me?
What! rate, rebuke, and roughly send to prison,
The immediate heir of England? Was this easy?
May this be washed in *Leike*, and forgotten?

Chief Justice. I then did use the person of your father,
The image of his power lay then in me;
And in the administration of his law,
While I was busy for the common weal,
Your highness pleased to forget my place,
The majesty and power of law and justice,
The image of the king whom I presented,
And struck me in my very seat of judgment;
Whereon, as an offender to your father,
I gave bold sway to my authority,
And did commit you *. If the deed were ill,
Be you contented, wearing now the garland,
To have a son set your decrees at nought,
To pluck down justice from your awful bench,
To trip the course of law, and blunt the sword,
That guards the peace and safety of your person;
Nay more, to spurn at your most royal image,
And mock your working in a second body.
Question your royal thoughts, make the case yours;
Be now the father, and propose a son,
Hear your own dignity so much profaned,
See your most sacred laws so loosely slighted,
Behold yourself so by a son disdained,
And then imagine me taking your part,
And in your power so silencing your son—
After this cold consideration, sentence me;
And as you are a king, speak in your state,
What I have done that misbecame my place,
My person, or my liege's sovereignty.

Henry. You are right, Justice, and you weigh this well—
Therefore still bear the ballance and the sword;
And I do wish your honours may increase,
Till you do live to see a son of mine
Offend you, and obey you as I did †.
For which I do commit into your hand,
The unstained sword that you have used to bear;
With this remembrance, that you use the same

* This is an historic fact.

† I should chuse to alter the line thus---Offend not, but obey you as I did.

With a like bold, just, and impartial spirit,
 As you have done 'gainst me. There is my hand,
 You shall be as a father to my youth,
 My voice shall sound as you do prompt mine ear,
 And I will stoop and humble my intents
 To your well-practised wise directions.
 And, princes, all believe me, I beseech ye :
 My father is gone *wild* † into his grave,
 For in his tomb lie my affections ‡ ;
 And with his spirit *sadly* || I survive,
 To mock the expectations of the world,
 To frustrate prophecies, and to raze out
 Rotten opinion, which hath set me down
 After my seeming. Though my tide of blood
 Hath proudly flowed in vanity till now,
 Now doth it turn, and ebb back to the sea,
 Where it shall mingle with the state of floods,
 And flow, henceforth, in formal majesty:
 Now call we our high court of Parliament,
 And let us chuse such limbs of noble counsel,
 That the great body of our state may go
 In equal rank with the best-governed nation ;
 That war, or peace, or both at once, may be
 As things acquainted and familiar to us ;
 In which you, father, shall have foremost hand.
 Our coronation done, we will accite,
 As I before remembered, all our state ;
 And, Heaven consigning to my good intents,
 No prince nor peer shall have just cause to say,
 Heaven shorten *Harry's* happy life one day !

This judge's name was *Hankford*. But the favourable event here described, never happened, with regard to him. Shakespeare, I suppose, only introduced it, by way of heightening our idea of the young king; and in this light, though the fact be false, it may, however, according to the distinction of some moral writer, be considered as a *secondary truth*, because it corresponds with the character of the agent, and

† *Wild*. The sense of the word, in this place, is obscure; and the figure of speech necessary to explain it, must be extended on the rack, to confess its meaning. But as the best way of studying an author, is to make him a comment on himself; by this rule we must suppose this expression to intend, that the reality of his *wildness*, an impression of which his father carried with him to the grave, is as much buried there, as his idea of it is. The prince's *wildness* is spoken of in other places, and is mentioned in such a manner as to support this explanation.

‡ *Affections*. Loose habits, and dissipated manners.

|| *Sadly*, for soberly, seriously, or thoughtfully.

would

would probably have happened, had the poor man lived to have appeared before him.

But, alas ! the inconsistencies of human nature ! This upright judge, this brave man, was struck with such a panic on the demise of *Henry the Fourth*, that he instantly formed a scheme for destroying himself, in the following manner : He gave strict orders to his park keeper, to shoot any person that should attempt to pass through his grounds, without giving an account of his name and business. In the middle of that night, he put himself in the way, refused to answer, and was immediately killed, according to the mad scheme of his pusillanimous purpose.

S C E N E VII.

I shall close my remarks on this Play, with the following noble speech of the young king, in which his truly great and amiable character is finely wound up.

Falstaff, Pistol, and others.

Falstaff. My king, my Jove, I speak to thee, my heart !

King. I know thee not, old man, fall to thy prayers—

How ill white hairs become a fool and jester !

I have long dreamed of such a kind of man,

So surfeit-swelled, so old, and so prophane ;

But being awake, I do despise my dream.

Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace ;

Leave gormandizing. Know, the grave doth gape

For thee thrice wider than for other men.

Reply not to me with a fool-born jest,

Prefume not that I am the thing I was ;

For Heaven doth know, so shall the world perceive,

That I have turned away my former self ;

So will I those that kept *it* company.

When thou dost hear I am as I have been,

Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,

The tutor and the feeder of my riots :

Till then, I banish thee, on pain of death,

As I shall do the rest of my misleaders,

Not to come near our person, by ten miles.

For competence of life I will allow you,

That lack of means enforce you not to evil ;

And, as we hear you do reform yourselves,

We will, according to your strength and qualities,

Give you advancement.

H E N R Y the F I F T H.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HENRY the Fifth.

KING OF FRANCE.

THE DAUPHIN.

DUKE OF YORK, } Uncles to Henry.

DUKE OF EXETER, }

DUKE OF BEDFORD, } Brothers to Henry.

DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, }

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

BISHOP OF ELY.

EARL OF WESTMORLAND.

EARL OF CAMBRIDGE, }

LORD SCROOP, } Conspirators.

SIR THOMAS GREY, }

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

DUKE OF ORLEANS.

FLUELLIN, a Welch Captain.

RAMBURES, } French Lords.

GRANDPREE, }

The Constable of France.

SIR THOMAS ERPINGHAM.

MOUNTJOY, a French Herald.

BATES and WILLIAMS, English Soldiers.

W O M E N.

ISABEL, Queen of France.

CATHARINE, her Daughter.

A LADY of the French Court.

HENRY the FIFTH.

ACT I. SCENE I.

THE sudden reformation of Henry Prince of Wales, upon his succession to the crown, is a fact recorded in history; and there have been sufficient instances of such an exertion of latent virtue in mankind, upon record, to evince its not being a thing unnatural; though, sad to say it, not enough to prevent its being reckoned in the class of uncommon events. Let us but lend our own assistance, and grace will seldom be found wanting. This extraordinary character is most beautifully described in the example now before us.

Canterbury and Ely, discoursing about the King.

Canterbury. The courses of his youth promised it not—

The breath no sooner left his father's body,
But that his *wildness*, mortified in him,
Seemed to die too; yea, at that very moment,
Consideration like an angel came,
And whipt the offending Adam out of him;
Leaving his body as a paradise,
To envelop and contain celestial spirits*.
Never came reformation in a flood,
With such an heady current, scowering faults†;
Nor ever hydra-headed wilfulness‡
So soon did lose his seat, and all at once,
As in this king.

* What a beautiful and poetical allusion is here made to the circumstance of our first parents being exiled from Eden!

† Alluding to Hercules turning the course of a river through the Augean stables.

‡ Shakespeare having hinted at one of the labours of Hercules, a second immediately occurred; and I should not have been surprized, in the exuberance of his imagery, if he had gone through the whole dozen; if it was only for an opportunity of making this reflection, that a reformation from vice, was an harder task than them all put together.

SCENE II.

Here follows a fine lesson for states and potentates to reflect seriously upon, when they are publishing manifestos, or meditating a war.

The King, and Canterbury, who was president of his council :

Henry. My learned lord, we pray you to proceed ;
And justly and religiously unfold,
Why the law *Salic*, that they have in France,
Or should, or should not, bar us in our claim.
And, God forbid, my dear and faithful lord,
That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading,
Or nicely charge your understanding soul,
With opening titles miscreate, whose right
Suits not in native colours with the truth.
For God doth know how many now in health,
Shall drop their blood in approbation *
Of what your reverence shall incite us to.
Therefore take heed how you impawn your person †,
How you awake the sleeping sword of war ;
We charge you, in the name of God, take heed.
For never two such kingdoms did contend,
Without much fall of blood ; whose guiltless drops
Are every one a woe, a sore complaint,
'Gainst him whose wrong gives edge unto the swords,
That make such waste in *brief mortality*.
Under this conjuration, speak, my lord ;
For we will hear, note, and believe in heart,
That what you speak is in your conscience washed,
As pure as sin with baptism.

There is a just description of the nature of government, given a good deal further in the same Scene.

Canterbury and Ely.

Ely. While that the armed hand doth fight abroad,
The advised head defends itself at home ;
For government, though high, and low, and lower,
Put into parts, doth keep in one consent,
Congreeing in a full and natural close,
Like music.

Both the distinction and the simile here made use of, are almost a literal translation of a parallel passage

* *In approbation.* In support of a cause he had pronounced to be just.

† Pledge your character and conscience.

in Cicero; and there are so many other allusions of the same kind, to be met with throughout our author's writings, as might lead one into an opinion of his being a tolerable classical scholar, notwithstanding Ben Johnson's invidious line,

“ Altho' thou hadst small Latin, and less Greek.”

But in denying him the accomplishment of literature, he paid an higher compliment to his genius, than perhaps he meant; as this was to impute to him the greater merit of being possessed of the same fancy and judgment with the best of the Antients, without the advantages of their example or instruction.

The subject of the above speech is considered more at large, and treated in detail, in the deduction drawn from it in the reply.

Canterbury. Therefore Heaven doth divide
The state of man in divers functions,
Setting endeavour in continual motion;
To which is fixed, as an aim or butt,
Obedience. For so work the honey-bees;
Creatures, that by a rule in nature, teach
The art of order to a peopled kingdom.
They have a king, and officers of fort,
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home;
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad;
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings,
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds;
Which pillage they with merry march bring home
To the tent-royal of their emperor;
Who busied in his majesty, surveys
The singing mason building roofs of gold;
The civil citizen kneading up the honey;
The poor mechanic porters crowding in
Their heavy burdens, at his narrow gate;
The sad-eyed justice with his surly hum,
Delivering o'er to executors pale,
The lazy yawning drone. I thus infer,
That many things, having full reference
To one consent, may work contrariously.
As many arrows loosed several ways,
Come to one mark; as many ways meet in one town;
As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea;
As many lines close in the dial's center;

So may a thousand actions, once a-foot,
End in one purpose, and be all well borne,
Without defeat.

S C E N E III.

When the ambassadors of France come before Henry, they ask him whether they may speak their errand in exprefs words, or must be restrained to deliver the substance of it only, in more covert terms. To which he replies :

Henry. We are no tyrant, but a Christian king,
Unto whose grace our passion is as subject,
As are our wretches fettered in our prisons ;
Therefore, with frank and with uncurbed plainness,
Tell us the Dauphin's mind.

The above speech is worth noting, considering the maxim generally. Resentment may be excusable in a man, but is unpardonable in a king. In this character he is to consider himself but as one of the states of government only ; and legislature is dispassionate. Shall a judge suffer himself to be biased by private pique, when pronouncing a public sentence ? When power is made use of to revenge personal affronts, royalty ceases, and tyranny begins.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Chorus. O England ! model to thy inward greatness,
Like little body with a mighty heart !
What might'st thou do, that honour would thee do,
Were all thy children kind and natural !

This is a reflection which cannot too frequently be made, and should be the preamble to every act or deed of Kings, Lords, and Commons. See the speech and reflection which concludes King John, in this Work.

S C E N E III.

If I had attended to the order of the subjects, without regarding that of the Scenes, I should have added the following passage to the last observation on the former Act ; and to which note I beg leave now to refer the Reader.

'The

The King, on sentencing the conspirators, Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey, says,

God quit you in his mercy ! Hear your sentence.
 You have conspired against our royal person ;
 Joined with an enemy proclaimed, and from his coffers
 Received the golden earnest of our death ;
 Wherein you would have sold your king to slaughter,
 His princes and his peers to servitude,
 His subjects to oppression and contempt,
 And his whole kingdom into desolation.
Touching our person, seek we no revenge ;
 But we our kingdom's safety must so tender,
 Whose ruin you three sought, that to her laws
 We do deliver you. Go, therefore, hence,
Poor miserable wretches, to your death ;
The taste whereof God of his mercy give
You patience to endure, and true repentance
Of all your dear offences !

S C E N E V.

The King of France, and the Dauphin.

Dauphin. My most redoubted father,
 It is most meet we arm us 'gainst the foe :
 For peace itself should not so dull a kingdom,
 Though war and no known quarrel were in question,
 But that defences, musters, preparations,
 Should be maintained, assembled, and collected,
 As were a war in expectation.
 Therefore, I say, 'tis meet we all go forth
 To view the sick and feeble parts of France ;
 But let us do it with no shew of fear ;
 No, with no more, than if we heard that England
 Were busied with a Whitsun morris-dance.

Such ought to be the vigilance of all states.—
 When sovereigns repose their heads supinely in the
 lap of peace, they must expect to be taken napping
 at some unguarded hour, or other. The best way
 of making peace is with sword in hand, they say—
 Yes—and to preserve it, too.

In the continuation of this Scene, the same speaker
 adds another rule of prudence and safety to the
 former.

Dauphin. In causes of defence, 'tis best to weigh
 The enemy more mighty than he seems ;

So the proportions of defence are filled ;
Which of a weak and niggardly projection
Doth, like a miser, spoil his coat with scanting.

And again ; the same subject is in some sort carried on, with additional reflections.

French King. You see this chase is hotly followed, friends.

Dauphin. Turn head, and stop pursuit ; for coward dogs
Most spend their mouths *, when what they seemed to threaten
Runs far before them. Good my sovereign,
Take up the English short ; and let them know
Of what a monarchy you are the head.
*Self-love, my liege, is not so vile a sin,
As self-neglecting.*

S C E N E VI.

In the speech of the English Ambassador to the French King, claiming the rights of Henry, there are some truly alarming reflections proposed to the consideration of all states that undertake or maintain a war in an unjust cause ; and may be considered as a supplement to Henry's first speech, in the former Act.

Exeter. He bids you, in the bowels of the Lord,
Deliver up the crown ; and to take mercy
On the poor souls for whom this hungry war
Opens his vasty jaws ; upon your head
Turning the dead men's blood, the widows' tears,
The orphans' cries, the pining maidens' groans †,
For husbands, fathers, and betrothed lovers,
That shall be swallowed in this controversy.

A C T III. S C E N E IV.

The same subject and reflections are repeated here, before the besieged gates of Harfleur.

Henry. How yet resolves the governor of the town ?
This is the latest parle we will admit ;
Therefore to our best mercy give yourselves,
Or like to men proud of destruction,
Defy us to our worst. As I'm a soldier,

* *Open or bark.* Huntsman's phrase.

† The Text is much improved by a transposition of the images in these two lines, according to a note of Doctor Johnson's on the passage.

A name that in my thoughts becomes me best,
 If I begin the battery once again,
 I will not leave the half-achieved Harfleur,
 Till in her ashes she lie buried.
 The gates of mercy shall be all shut up ;
 And the fleshed soldier, rough and hard of heart,
 In liberty of bloody hand shall range,
 With conscience wide as hell, mowing like grass
 Your fresh fair virgins, and your flowering infants.
 What is it then to me, if impious war,
 Arrayed in flames like to the prince of fiends,
 Do with his smircht complexion all fell feats
 Enlinked to waste and desolation ?
 What is't to me, when you yourselves are cause,
 If your pure maidens fall into the hand
 Of hot and forcing violation ?
 What rein can hold licentious Wickedness,
 When down the hill he holds his fierce career ?
 We may as bootless spend our vain command
 Upon the enraged soldiers in their spoil,
 As send our precepts to th' Leviathan
 To come a-shore. Therefore, ye men of Harfleur,
 Take pity of your town, and of your people,
 While yet my soldiers are in my command ;
 While yet the cool and temperate wind of grace
Disperse * the filthy and contagious clouds
 Of heady murder, spoil and villainy,
 If not, why, in a moment look to see
 The blind and bloody soldier with foul hand
 Defile the locks of your shrill-shrieking daughters,
 Your fathers taken by the silver beards,
 And their most reverend heads dashed to the walls ;
 Your naked infants spitted upon pikes,
 While the mad mothers with their howls confused
 Do break the clouds ; as did the wives of Jewry,
 At Herod's bloody-hunting slaughter-men.
 What say ye ? Will ye yield, and this avoid ?
 Or, guilty in defence, be thus destroyed ?

What an horrid representation is here given of
 the too general state of routed battle ! A civil war
 excited among all the wild beasts of the forest, could
 not afford so shocking a picture. No creature, but

* *Disperse*—The word in the Text is *o'er blow*. The Commentator finds
 fault with the harshness of the metaphor, but leaves it so. I have ventured on
 this alteration, and have put the verb into the potential mood to preserve the
 metre of the line,

man, joins cruelty with fierceness, or adds malice to rage! None, but the *inhuman human* savage, Man!

The above description of a victorious enemy is too true a one, if historic evidence can **force** reluctant credit—For war has its barbarous *rights*—or *wrongs*, rather—which neither humanity can prevent, nor discipline restrain, nor justice punish—War is its own legislator, and victory to itself a law.

“ It is War’s prize to take all ’vantages *.”

S C E N E VIII.

After the surrender of Harfleur, when Henry is on his march to Calais, he is met by Mountjoy, the French Herald, who delivers an insolent defiance from the king of France, requiring to know what ransom he will compound to pay, for leave to retire alive out of the kingdom; to which he replies,

Thou dost thy office fairly. Turn thee back,
And tell thy king I do not seek him now,
But could be willing to march on to Calais
Without impeachment; for, to say the *sooth* †,
Though ’tis no wisdom to confess so much
Unto an enemy of craft and vantage,
My people are with sickness much enfeebled,
My numbers lessened, and those few I have,
Almost no better than so many French;
Who, when they were in health, I tell thee, Herald,
I thought upon one pair of English legs
Did march three Frenchmen—Yet, forgive me, God,
That I do brag thus! this your air of France
Hath blown that vice in me; I must repent.
Go, therefore, tell thy master, here I am—
My ransom is this frail and worthless trunk,
My army but a weak and sickly guard;
Yet, God before, tell him we will come on,
Though France himself, and such another neighbour,
Stand in our way. There’s for thy labour, Mountjoy;
Go, bid thy master well advise himself—
If we may pass, we will; if we be hindered,
We shall your tawny ground with your red blood
Discolour; and so, Mountjoy, fare you well.
The sum of all our answer is but this:
We would not seek a battle, as we are,

* Henry VI. Third Part.

† *Sooth*, an old Saxon word for *truth*.

Yet, as we are, we say, we will not shun it—
So tell your matter—

There is something extremely fine in Henry's reply to the French gasconading taunt above. It is uncommon to meet with so much carelessness and courage in the same character—There is no such description in history, nor have many people, probably, ever been acquainted with it among the living manners of men; and yet the representation of it appears to be so perfectly natural, that we must greatly admire the talents of a writer, who could thus realize, in effect, a mere idea.

The bravery of Henry scorned to deny the condition of his troops, either with regard to their health or numbers: these circumstances the enemy pretended to have been acquainted with already, or were determined to make an experiment of, at least; he therefore openly acknowledges the truth of his weak situation; and this with the same ease and humour, as he would have delivered himself to Falstaff, had he been his aid-du-camp for the day.

Upon his royal face there is no note,
How dread an army have enrounded him*;

But, at the same time, he most resolutely declares his purpose of trying the event, at every hazard of life, claim, and liberty.

The contemptuous sarcasms he throws out, in this speech, against the French nation, besides shewing an admirable temper and composure of mind in such difficult circumstances, convey also an apt repartee to the scornful insolence of the Dauphin; who, in return to Henry's demanding his right of succession to the crown of France, sent him a parcel of tennis-balls to play with, in allusion to the slight repute of his former life and manners. Pertness is impertinence; but repartee has the *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, on its side.

* Chorus to Act IV.

Shakespeare has a great resemblance to Ariosto, whose stile had a mixture of humour, with sublimity in it. The late ingenious Mr. Hawkins says of the latter, "His heroes are full of merriment in the midst of danger, and he seldom describes a battle, without a jest."

SCENE II.

The same magnanimity of character in Henry, is displayed throughout this Play. One of the instances of it we may see in this Scene, out of which also some other things worthy of notice may be picked up. The Reader will mark them as he peruses.

The English camp at Agincourt.

Henry and Gloucester.

Henry. Glo'ster, 'tis true, that we are in great danger ;
The greater, therefore, should our courage be.

Enter Bedford.

Good-morrow, brother Bedford—God Almighty !
There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
Would man observingly distil it out ;
For our bad neighbours make us early stirrers,
Which is both healthful, and good husbandry.
Besides, they are our outward consciences,
And preachers to us all ; admonishing,
That we should dress us fairly for our end.
Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the Devil himself.

Enter Erpingham.

Good morrow, old Sir Thomas Erpingham ;
A good soft pillow for that good white head,
Were better than a churlish turf of France.

Erpingham. Not so, my liege ; this lodging likes me better ;
Since I may say, now lie I like a king.

Henry. 'Tis good for men to love their present pain,
Upon example ; so the spirit is eased ;
And when the mind is quickened, out of doubt,
The organs, though defunct and dead before,
Break up their drowsy grave, and newly move
With call'd *slough**, and fresh legerity.

* *Slough*. The skin of a snake, the casting of which was thought formerly to renew its vigour.

Lend me thy cloak, Sir Thomas. Brothers both,
Commend me to the princes in our camp ;
Do my good morrow to them, and anon,
Desire them all to my pavilion.

Gloucester. We shall, my liege.

Erpingham. Shall I attend your grace ?

Henry. No, my good knight,
Go with my brothers to my lords of England.
I and my bosom must debate awhile,
And then I would no other company.

Erpingham. The Lord in heaven blefs thee, noble Harry !

Henry. God a-mercy, old heart, thou speak'st chearfully.

S C E N E IV.

And again ; his excellent compofure of mind is manifested further, in this Scene ; where he answers the challenges of the guards going their rounds, but without revealing himself. I shall here present the intire passage to the Reader, referring, as in the former instance, the several parts of it which deserve observation, to his own apprehension.

Henry going out, enter Bates and Williams, two Soldiers :

Williams. Who goes there ?

Henry. A friend.

Williams. Under what Captain serve you ?

Henry. Under Sir Thomas Erpingham.

Williams. A good old commander, and a most kind gentleman.
I pray you, what thinks he of our estate ?

Henry. Even as men wrecked upon a sand, that look to be washed off the next tide.

Bates. He hath not told his thought to the king ?

Henry. No ; nor is it meet he should ; for, though I speak it to you, I think the king is but a man, as I am—The violet smells to him, as it doth to me ; all his senses have but human conditions. His ceremonies laid by, in his nakedness he appears but a man ; and though his affections are higher mounted than ours, yet when they stoop, they stoop with the like wing ; therefore, when he sees reason of fears, as we do, his fears, out of doubt, be of the same relish as ours are ; yet in reason no man should possess him with any appearance of fear, lest he, by shewing it, should dishearten his army.

Bates.

Bates. He may shew what outward courage he will; but, I believe, as cold a night as 'tis, he could wish himself in the Thames up to the neck; and so I would he were, and I by him, at all adventures, so we were quit here.

Henry. By my troth, I will speak my conscience of the king; I think he would not wish himself any where, but where he is.

Bates. Then would he were here alone; so should he be sure to be ransomed, and many poor men's lives saved.

Henry. I dare say you love him not so ill to wish him here alone, however you speak this to feel other men's minds. Methinks, I could not die any where so contented, as in the king's company; his cause being just, and his quarrel honourable.

Williams. That's more than we know.

Bates. Ay, or more than we should seek after; for we know enough, if we know we are the king's subjects; if his cause be wrong, our obedience to the king wipes the crime of it out of us.

Williams. But if the cause be not good, the king himself hath a heavy reckoning to make; when all those legs, and arms, and heads, chopped off in a battle, shall join together at the latter day, and cry all, *we died at such a place*; some swearing, some crying for a surgeon, some upon their wives left poor behind them, some upon the debts they owe, some upon their children rawly left. I am asfeared there are few die well, that fall in battle; for how can they charitably dispose of any thing, when blood is their argument? Now, if these men do not die well, it will be a black matter for the king, that led them to it, whom to disobey were against all proportion of subjection.

Henry. So, if a son that is sent by his father about merchandize, do fall into some lewd action, and miscarry, the imputation of his wickedness, by your rule, should be imposed upon the father that sent him; or, if a servant under his master's command, transporting a sum of money, be assailed by robbers, and die in many irreconciled iniquities, you may call the business of the master the author of the servant's damnation. But this is not so—The king is not bound to answer the particular endings of his soldiers, the father of his son, nor the master of his servant; for they purpose not their deaths, when they purpose their services. Besides, there is no king, be his cause never so spotless, if it come to the arbitrament of swords, can try it with all unspotted soldiers. Some, peradventure, have on them the guilt of premeditated and contrived murder; some of beguiling virgins with the broken seals of perjury; some making the wars their bulwark, that have before gored the gentle bosom of peace with pillage and robbery. Now, if these men have defeated the law, and out-run native punishment, *though they can out-strip men, they have no wings to fly from God.* War is his beadle, war is his vengeance; so that herein men are punished, for before-breach of the king's law, in the king's quarrel

NOW—

now—Where they feared death, they have borne life away; and where they would be safe, they perish. Then, if they die unprovided, no more is the king guilty of their damnation, than he was before guilty of those impieties for which they are now visited. Every subject's duty is the king's, but every subject's soul is his own. Therefore should every soldier, in the wars, do as every sick man, in his bed, wash every moth out of his conscience; and, dying so, death is to him an advantage; or, not dying, the time was blessedly lost, wherein such preparation was gained; and to him that escapes, it were not sin to think that, making God so free an offer, he let him out-live that day to see his greatness, and to teach others how they should prepare.

Williams. 'Tis certain that every man that dies ill, the ill is upon his own head; the king is not to answer for it.

In the continuation of this Scene, Williams quarrels with the king, still unknown, and they exchange gages with each other, to fight on their next interview. Henry does all this in sport; and I should not have brought it forward to the Reader's view, but that this particular is alluded to, just now, in the Sixteenth Scene of this Act.

S C E N E V:

The following beautiful speech is replete with fine reflection, rich language, and poetical imagery. It immediately follows the above dialogue, when the soldiers quit the Scene, and is a meditation naturally arising from the argument there discussed.

Henry solus.

Upon the king! let us our lives, our souls,
Our debts, our careful wives, our children, and
Our sins, lay on the king; he must bear all.
O hard condition, and twin-born with greatness,
Subject to breath of every fool, whose sense
No more can feel, but his own wringing!
What infinite heart-ease must kings neglect,
That private men enjoy! And what have kings,
That private have not too, save ceremony?
Save general ceremony?
And what art thou, thou idol ceremony?
What kind of God art thou, that sufferest more
Of mortal griefs, than do thy worshippers?
What are thy rents? What are thy comings in?

O ceremony,

O ceremony, shew me but thy worth ;
 What is thy soul, O adoration ?
 Art thou aught else but place, degree, and form,
 Creating awe and fear in other men ?
 Wherein thou art less happy, being feared,
 Than they in fearing.
 What drink'st thou oft, instead of homage sweet,
 But poisoned flattery ? O, be sick, great greatness,
 And bid thy ceremony give thee cure.
 Think'st thou the fiery fever will go out,
 With titles blown from adulation ?
 Will it give place to flexure and low bending ?
 Can'st thou, when thou command'st the beggar's knee,
 Command the health of it ? No, thou proud dream,
 That playest so subtly with a king's repose ;
 I am a king that find thee ; and I know
 'Tis not the balm, the sceptre, and the ball,
 The sword, the mace, the crown imperial,
 The entre-tissued robe of gold and pearl,
 The farfed * title running 'fore the king,
 The throne he sits on, nor the tide of pomp,
 That beats upon the high shore of this world ;
 No, not all these thrice-gorgeous ceremonies,
 Not all these laid in bed majestical,
 Can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave,
 Who with a body filled, and vacant mind,
 Gets him to rest, crammed with distressful bread,
 Never sees horrid night, the child of hell,
 But like a lacquey, from the rise to set,
 Sweats in the eye of Phoebus, and all night
 Sleeps in Elysium ; next day, after dawn,
 Doth rise and help Hyperion † to his horse ;
 And follows so the ever-running year,
 With profitable labour, to his grave.
 And, *but for ceremony*, such a wretch,
 Winding up days with toil, and nights with sleep,
 Hath the fore-hand and vantage of a king.
 The slave, a member of the country's peace,
 Enjoys it ; but in gross brain little wots,
 What watch the king keeps to maintain the peace,
 Whose hours the peasant best advantages.

What is, indeed, the superior state of kings, but greater pomp, anxiety, and danger !

* *Farfed* signifies *puffed* or *tumid*.

† The morning star.

S C E N E VI.

Henry makes a good prayer here, just before the engagement; in the first part of which is expressed a proper theological sense, in the referring all events to the disposition of Providence; but in the latter end of it, the Popish doctrine of *Commutation*, the making atonement for misdeeds by pious acts, without performing the justice of *Retribution*, is fully set forth.

Henry. O God of battles! steel my soldiers hearts;
 Possess them not with fear; take from them now
 The sense of reckoning, lest the opposed numbers
 Pluck their hearts from them—Not to day, O Lord,
 O not to day, think not upon the fault
 My father made in compassing the crown.
 I Richard's body have interred new,
 And on it have bestowed more contrite tears,
 Than from it issued forced drops of blood.
 Five hundred poor I have in yearly pay,
 Who twice a-day their withered hands hold up
 Toward heaven, to pardon blood; and I have built
 Two chauntries, where the sad and solemn priests
 Sing still for Richard's soul. More will I do;
 Though all that I can do is nothing worth,
 Since that my penitence comes after all,
 Imploping pardon.

S C E N E VII.

The brisk, presumptuous, and gasconading spirit of the French nation, is well exposed in the following Scene, laid in their camp, just before the action.

The Dauphin, Duke of Orleans, Rambures, &c.

Orleans. The sun doth gild our armour; up, my lords.

Dauphin. *Montez cheval*—My horse, valet, lacquey, ha!

Orleans. O brave spirit!

Enter Constable.

Now, my lord Constable?

Constable. Hark, how our steeds for present service neigh!

Dauphin.

Dauphin. Mount them, and make incision in their sides,
That their hot blood may spin in English eyes,
And daunt them with superfluous courage. Ha !

Rambures. What, will you have them weep our horses' blood
How shall we, then, behold their natural tears ?

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. The English are embattled, you French peers.

Constable. To horse ! ye gallant princes, strait to horse !

Do but behold yon poor and starved band,
And your fair shew shall suck away their souls,
Leaving them but the shales * and husks of men.
'There is not work enough for all our hands,
Scarce blood enough in all their sickly veins,
To give each naked curtle-ax a stain,
'That our French gallants shall to-day draw out,
And sheath for lack of sport. Let's but blow on them,
The vapour of our valour will o'eturn them ;
'Tis positive 'gainst all exception, lords,
That our superfluous lacqueys and our peasants,
Who in unnecessary action swarm
About our squares of battle, were enow
To purge this field of such a hilding † foe ;
Though we upon this mountain's basis by,
'Took stand for idle contemplation ;
But that our honours must not. What's to say ?
A very little, little, let us do,
And all is done. Then let the trumpet sound
The *tucket-sonance*, and the note to mount ;
For our approach shall so much *dare the field*,
That England shall *couch down* in fear, and yield ||.

Enter Grandpree.

Grandpree. Why do ye stay so long, my lords of France ?

Yon island carrions, desperate of their bones,
Ill-favouredly become the morning field ;
Their ragged curtains poorly are let loose,
And our air shakes them passing scornfully.
Big Mars seems bankrupt in their beggared host,
And faintly through a rusty beaver peeps ;
The horsemen sit like fixed candlesticks,
With torch-staves in their hands ; and their poor jades
Lob down their heads, dropping the hide and hips ;
The gum down-rope from their pale dead eyes ;

* *Shale*, corrupt English for *shell*.

† *Hilding*, mean, or contemptible.

|| The words marked in Italics, in these three last lines, are borrowed from the sporting phrase, particularly *salconry*, to express a scorn of the English forces.
And

And in their pale dull mouths the gimmal-bit †
 Lies foul with chewed grass, still and motionless;
 And their executors, the knavish crows,
 Fly o'er them, all impatient for their hour.
 Description cannot suit itself in words,
 To demonstrate the life of such a battle,
 In life so lifeless as it shews itself.

Constable. They've said their prayers, and they wait for death.

Dauphin. Shall we go send them dinners and fresh suits,
 And give their fasting horses provender,
 And after fight them?

Grandpree's description, given here, of a fatigued, dispirited, and weather-beaten host is most masterly drawn, in the true picturesque stile, in the above passage; and if the French had fought, on that memorable day, but as well as Shakespeare has made them speak upon the occasion, England might not, perhaps, have numbered France among the titles of its crown.

S C E N E VIII.

The gallant spirit of a soldier is nobly set forth in this scene, which, were it founded merely in the imagination of the poet, would not be so material to be remarked upon; but being grounded on historic fact, ought to be taken notice of for the honour of our English hero.

Henry and Westmorland.

Westmorland. O that we now had here
 But one ten thousand of those men in England,
 That do no work to-day *!

King. What's he that wishes so?
 My cousin Westmorland? No, my fair cousin,
 If we are marked to die, we are enow
 To do our country loss; and if to live,
 The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
 God's will! I pray thee wish not one man more.
 By Jove, I am not covetous of gold,
 Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;

† A curb bridle.

* The battle of Agincourt was fought on St. Crispian's day, a great festival then observed in England.

It yerns me not if men my garments wear ;
 Such outward things dwell not in my desires ;
 But if it be a sin to covet honour,
 I am the most offending soul alive.
 No, 'faith, my lord, with not a man from England—
 God's peace ! I would not lose so great an honour,
 As one man more, methinks, would share from me,
 For the best hopes I have. Don't wish one more ;
 Rather proclaim it, Westmorland, through my host,
 'That he who hath no stomach to this fight,
 Let him depart ; his passport shall be made,
 And crowns for convoy put into his purse.
 We would not die in that man's company,
 That fears his fellowship to die with us.
 This day is called the feast of Crispian—
 He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
 Will stand a tip-toe when this day is named,
 And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
 He that shall live this day, and see old age,
 Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
 And say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian ;
 Then will he strip his sleeve, and shew his scars.
 Old men forget, yet shall not all forget,
 But they'll remember, with advantages †,
 What feats they did that day. Then shall our names,
 Familiar in their mouths as household words,
 Harry the king, Bedford, and Exeter,
 Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Glo'ster *,
 Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.
 This story shall the good man teach his son,
 And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
 From this day to the ending of the world,
 But we in it shall be remembered ;
 We few, we happy few, we band of brothers ;
 For he, to-day, that sheds his blood with me,
 Shall be my brother ; be he ne'er so vile,
 This day shall gentle his condition.
 And gentlemen in England, now a-bed,
 Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
 And hold their manhoods cheap while any speaks,
 That fought with us upon saint Crispian's day.

The latter part of this speech, though somewhat too declamatory, contains many of those reflections

† With *advantages*. Magnifying their own prowess.

* Shakespeare seems to have made the king purposely leave the name of Westmorland out of this illustrious roll, from a pique at his having wished for additional forces, or more probably to preserve the chastity of historic enumeration ; as he had not distinguished himself in the action.

and considerations, which used, *formerly*, to inspire our troops with courage, while that virtuous and noble spirit was yet retained among our brave ancestors, which led them to respect what their country or posterity might think or say of them.

S C E N E IX.

The tenor of Henry's character is still finely preserved, in the following passage; which, as his cause was just, and that his magnanimity and resolution so happily bore him through the infinite odds of opposition, deserves well to be observed upon.

When the two armies are just on the point of joining battle, the French Herald comes again to the English camp, repeating the same challenge as before from the Constable, requiring to know what terms the king would propose for his ransom; as supposing him already a captive.

Henry. I pray thee, bear my former answer back.

Bid them achieve me, and then sell my bones.

Good God! why should they mock poor fellows thus?

The man that once did sell the lion's skin,

While the beast lived, was killed with hunting him.

And many of our bodies shall, no doubt,

Find native graves; upon the which I trust,

Shall witness live, in brass, of this day's work. . . .

Let me speak proudly; tell the Constable,

We are but warriors for the working day*;

Our gayness, and our gilt, are all besmirched

With rainy marching in the painful field.

There's not a piece of feather† in our host—

Good argument, I hope, we will not fly;

And time hath worn us into slovenry

But by the mass, our hearts are in the trim;

And my poor foldiers tell me, yet ere night

They'll be in fresher robes, or they will pluck

The gay new coats o'er the French foldiers heads,

And turn them out of service. If they do,

As, if God please, they shall, my ransom then

Will soon be levied—Herald, save thy labour;

* We have no holiday change of apparel to put on. *We are men about our business.*

† A soldier's plume.

Come thou no more for ransom, gentle Herald ;
 They shall have none, I swear, but these my joints ;
 Which if they have as I will leave 'em them,
 Shall yield them little—Tell the Constable.

S C E N E XII.

Here follows a noble example of bravery, friendship, loyalty, and composure of mind—in fine, of every manly excellence and virtue, most beautifully described in the recital of one short and single action on the field of battle.

Henry and Exeter.

Henry. Well have we done, thrice valiant countrymen.
 But all's not done, the French yet keep the field.

Exeter. The Duke of York commends him to your majesty,

Henry. Lives he, good uncle ? Thrice within this hour
 I saw him down, thrice up again, and fighting,
 From helmet to the spur all bleeding o'er.

Exeter. In which array, brave foldier, doth he lie,
 Larding the plain ; and by his bloody side,
 Yoke-fellow to his honour-owing wounds,
 The noble earl of Suffolk also lies.
 Suffolk first died, and York, all haggled over,
 Comes to him where in gore he lay insteeped,
 And takes him by the beard, kisses the gashes
 That bloodily did yawn upon his face,
 And cries aloud, “ Tarry, my cousin Suffolk,
 “ My soul shall thine keep company to heaven—
 “ Tarry, sweet soul, for mine, then fly a-breast ;
 “ As in this glorious and well-foughten field
 “ We kept together in our chivalry.”
 Upon these words, I came and cheered him up ;
 He smiled me in the face, gave me his hand,
 And with a feeble gripe, says, “ Dear my lord,
 “ Commend my service to my sovereign.”
 So did he turn, and over Suffolk's neck
 He threw his wounded arm, and kissed his lips,
 And so espoused to death, with blood he sealed
 A testament of noble ending love.
 The pretty and sweet manner of it, forced
 Those waters from me, which I would have stopped ;
 But I had not so much of man in me,
 But all my mother came into my eyes,
 And gave me up to tears.

Henry.

Henry. I blame you not ;

For hearing this, I must perforce compound

With mistful eyes, or they will issue too—

But hark, what new alarm is this same ?

[*An Alarm.*]

The Poet has most judiciously interrupted Henry's speech, in this critical place. It would have been expected from him to have said something more, upon so interesting an occasion ; and yet it would have been impossible to have carried either sentiment or expression higher than Exeter had just done, on the same subject. Shakespeare has herein imitated the address of Timanthes, who, in his picture of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, covers her father's head with a veil.

SCENE XIV.

Henry. I was not angry, since I came to France,

Until this instant. Take a trumpet, Herald,

Ride thou unto the horsemen on yon hill ;

If they will fight with us, bid them come down,

Or void the field ; they do offend our fight ;

If they'll do neither, we will come to them,

And make them sker away, as swift as stones

Enforced from the old Assyrian slings.

The first sentence in the above speech, is one among the many instances in which Shakespeare has manifested his thorough knowledge in human nature. Henry acts with an heroic resolution during the whole of this perilous conflict, and replies with a daring and careless spirit to all the insolence and contempt of a powerful enemy ; but he expresses no rage, nor betrays the least manner of resentment, throughout. The dangers and difficulties of his situation required the utmost command and preservation of his temper. Distress and affliction are sovereign specifics for the pride and fierceness of man's nature. But these restraints being now removed, by his victory, he begins to yield the rein a little to passion, upon seeing the obstinacy of the enemy still continuing after their defeat.

S C E N E XVI.

Here: the passage hinted above, from the latter part of the Fourth Scene in this Act, comes to be cleared up, when the soldier finds that the unknown person he had engaged to fight with was his king. Upon this occasion he makes an apology for himself, which may have its use in being extended to a general reflection, applicable to all the superior ranks of life; That those who demean themselves below their character or dignity, can have no right to challenge that respect from the world, which they might otherwise be intitled to.

Henry and the Soldier.

Henry. How canst thou make me satisfaction ?

Soldier. All offences, my lord, come from the heart ; never came any from mine, that might offend your majesty.

Henry. It was ourself thou didst abuse.

Soldier. Your majesty came not like yourself ; you appeared to me but as a common man ; witness the night, your garments, your lowliness ; and what your highness suffered under that shape, I beseech you take it for your fault, and not mine ; for had you been as I took you for, I made no offence ; therefore, I beseech your highness, pardon me.

S C E N E XVII.

Henry preserves the same spirit of piety after his victory, as he had expressed just before the action, in Scene the Sixth of this Act ; in imputing his success to the arm and protection of Omnipotence alone.

Henry, Exeter, and Fluellin.

Henry. O God ! thy arm was here !

And not to us, but to thy arm alone,
Ascribe we all. When without stratagem,
But in plain shock and even play of battle,
Was ever known so great, and little loss,
On one part, and on t'other ? Take it, God,
For it is only thine.

Exeter. 'Tis wonderful !

Henry. Come, go we in procession to the village ;
And be it death proclaimed through our host,
To boast of this, or take that praise from God,
Which is his only.

Fluellin.

Fluellen. - Is it not lawful, an please your majesty, to tell how many are killed ?

Henry. Yes, captain, but with this acknowledgment,
That God fought for us.

ACT V. SCENE III.

In this Scene, a congress is held between the English and French, which is opened by the duke of Burgundy with a declamatory representation of a country during a state of war, which moves me more even than the description of a battle would do. The barbarous scene here set forth, is more general and permanent.—The latter passage, which mentions the condition of uneducated youth, is by much the most affecting part of the picture. The former damage, by labour, money, and a good harvest, may be repaired, but neither industry, mines, nor less than an age, can retrieve the other loss.

Burgundy. Since then my office hath so far prevailed,

That face to face, and royal eye to eye,
You have congregated, let it not disgrace me,
If I demand before this royal view,
What rub, or what impediment there is,
Why that the naked, poor, and mangled peace,
Dear nurse of arts, plenties, and joyful births,
Should not, in this best garden of the world,
Our fertile France, put up her lovely visage ?
Alas ! she hath from France too long been chased ;
And all her husbandry doth lie on heaps,
Corrupting in its own fertility.

Her vine, the merry chearer of the heart,
Unpruned dies ; her hedges even pleached,
Like prisoners wildly over-grown with hair,
Put forth disordered twigs ; her fallow leas*,
The darnel, hemlock, and rank fumitory,
Doth root upon, while that the coulter rusts,
That should deracinate such savagery ;
The even mead, that erst brought sweetly forth
The freckled cowslip, burnet, and green clover,
Wanting the scythe, all uncorrected, rank,
Conceives by idleness ; and nothing teems,
But hateful docks, rough thistles, kecksies, burs,
Losing both beauty and utility ;
And all our vineyards, fallows, meads, and hedges,
Defective in their natures, grow to wildness.

* *Leas*, inclosed grounds.

Even to our houses, and ourselves, our children,
 Have lost, or do not learn, for want of time,
 The sciences that should become our country ;
 But grow like savages, as soldiers will,
 That nothing do but meditate on blood,
 To swearing and stern looks, diffused * attire,
 And every thing that seems unnatural.

*

*

*

When a council is selected to retire apart, and confer upon the preliminaries of peace, the queen of France, who is present at the treaty, is asked by Henry, whether she chuses to go with the plenipotentiaries, or would stay where she is ?

Isabel. Our gracious brother, I will go with them ;
 Haply a woman's voice may do some good,
 When articles too nicely urged be stood on.

What Isabel says upon this occasion is very true. Men may be sometimes too sturdy with one another, even in matters of mere punctilio, or of trifling concern; each too proud or obstinate to recede; when the interposition of a woman may remove the difficulty, or compose the ferment, without either of the parties appearing to give up to the other.

The interfering of a woman, in disputes between men, is seldom an indifferent matter. It generally renders them either more gentle, or more refractory.

S C E N E IV.

Shakespeare appears to be so fond of the personage of Henry, that though he has already raised him to the highest pitch in our admiration and esteem, he continues to recommend him to us still further, by introducing him in a new character and situation, that of a lover and a courtier. He did the same for Falstaff before, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, at the request of Queen Elizabeth; but here he enters a volunteer in the service. Had any other writer ventured on such an attempt, he would have rendered him a quite different man from him-

* *Diffused for slovenly.*

self,

self, as Racine has *misrepresented* Achilles ; but Henry continues to be the same person still, only appearing in new circumstances ; the same humour, playful spirit, and careless ease, remain in his courtship, as may be seen in his rallying of Falstaff, replying to Mountjoy, or exchanging gages with the soldier.

It is necessary to transcribe the intire dialogue between him and his mistress, to support my observation, as well as for the entertainment of my Reader.

Henry, Catharine, and a French Lady.

Henry. Fair Catharine, most fair,
Will you vouchsafe to teach a soldier terms,
Such as will enter at a lady's ear,
And plead his love-suit to her gentle heart ?

Catharine. Your majesty shall mock at me, I cannot speak your England.

Henry. O, fair Catharine, if you will love me soundly with your French heart, I will be glad to hear you confess it brokenly with your English tongue. Do you like me, Kate ?

Catharine. *Pardonnez moy.* I cannot tell what is like me.

Henry. An angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel.

Catharine. *Que dit il, que je suis semblable à les anges ?*

Lady. *Oui, vrayment, sauve votre grace, ainsi dit il.*

Henry. I said so, dear Catharine, and I must not blush to affirm it.

Catharine. *O, bon Dieu, les langues des hommes sont pleines de tromperies.*

Henry. What says she, fair one ? that tongues of men are full of deceit ?

Lady. *Ouy, dat de tongues of de mans is be full of deceits. Dat is de princefs.*

Henry. The princefs is the better English woman. I'faith, Kate, my wooing is fit for thy understanding ; I am glad thou canst speak no better English ; for, if thou could'st, thou would find'st me such a plain king, that thou would'st think I had sold my farm, to buy a crown. I know no ways to mince it in love, but directly to say, *I love you* ; then, if you urge further than to say, *do you, in faith ?* I wear out my suit. Give me your answer ; i'faith do ; and so clap hands, and a bargain. How say you, lady ?

Catharine. *Sauf votre honneur,* me understand well.

Henry. Marry, if you put me to verses, or to dance for your sake, Kate, why you undid me ; for the one I have neither words, nor measure ; and for the other, I have as little address. If I could

win a lady at leap-frog, or by *volting* * into my saddle, with my armour on my back, under the correction of bragging be it spoken, I should quickly leap into matrimony. Or if I might buffet for my love, or bound my horse for her favours, I could lay on like a butcher, and sit like a jack-a-napes †, never off. But, before God, Kate, I cannot look greenly, nor gasp out my eloquence, nor have I cunning in protestation; only downright oaths, which I never use, till urged, and never break, for urging ‡. If thou canst love a fellow of this temper, Kate, whose face is not worth sun-burning, that never looks in his glass for love of any thing he sees there, let thine eye be thy cook. I speak plain soldier; if thou canst love me for this, take me; if not, to say to thee that I shall die, 'tis true; but for thy love, by the Lord, no; yet I love thee too. And while thou livest, Kate, take a fellow of plain and uncoined § contancy, for he perforce must do thee right, because he hath not the gift to woo in other places; for those fellows of infinite tongue, that can rhyme themselves into ladies favours, they do always reason themselves out again ||. What? a speaker is but a prater; a rhyme is but a ballad; a good leg will fall, a straight back will stoop, a black beard will turn white, a curled pate will grow bald, a fair face will wither, a full eye will wax hollow; but a good heart, Kate, is the sun and the moon; or rather the sun, and not the moon; for it shines bright, and never changes, but keeps his course truly. If thou would'st have such a one, take me; take a soldier; take a king. And what say'st thou then to my love? Speak, my fair, and fairly, I pray thee.

Catharine. Is it possible dat I should love de enemy of France?

Henry. No, it is not possible that you should love the enemy of France, Kate; but in loving me you should love the friend of France; for I love France so well, that I will not part with a village of it; I will have it all mine; and, Kate, when France is mine, and I am yours, then yours is France, and you are mine.

Catharine. I cannot tell vat is dat.

Henry. No, Kate? I will tell thee in French, which I am sure will hang upon my tongue, like a bride about her husband's neck,

* *Volting*, for *vaulting*. I have taken the liberty of spelling the word so, to distinguish it from the builder's term, according to an observation I have made on it, in another place. *To volt* comes from *voltiger*, *to fly*; and it is not pedantry to stick closely to an etymology, when a deviation from it confounds the sense. See Series of Letters, vol. vi. page 45.

† A monkey.

‡ This passage was so clear to all the Commentators, I suppose, that they have not given us any note upon it; but I think it needs explanation. The sense of it I take to be this: I never swear, except when urged by passion; but the oath once taken, I never urge the rashness of it as an excuse for its breach.

§ By this epithet, the poet means to compare sincerity to *bullion-gold*, before it is alloyed for coinage. The editors differ about the word, but Shakespeare explains it in this sense, before he finishes the sentence---because he hath not the gift to woo in other places---or gold is not so current as when turned into specie.

|| Reason themselves out again. The finding success so easy, tempts them to pursue more conquests, forsaking their former.

hardly

hardly to be shook off—*Quand j'ay le * possession de France, Et quand vous avez le possession de moi*—Let me see—What then? St. Dennis be my speed!—*Donc votre est France, Et vous ctes mienne.* It is as easy for me, Kate, to conquer the kingdom, as to speak so much more French. I shall never move thee in French, unless it be to laugh at me.

Catharine. Sauf votre honneur, le Francois que vous parlez est meilleur que l'Anglois lequel je parle.

Henry. No, faith, it's not, Kate; but thy speaking of my tongue, and I thine, most truly falsely, must needs be granted to be much at one. But, Kate, dost thou understand so much English? Canst thou love me?

Catharine. I cannot tell.

Henry. Can any of your neighbours tell, Kate? I'll ask them. Come, I know thou lovest me; and at night when you come into your closet, you'll question this gentlewoman about me; and I know, Kate, you will to her dispraise those parts in me, that you like best; but, good Kate, mock me mercifully; the rather, gentle Princess, because I love thee cruelly. If ever thou beest mine, Kate, as I have saving faith within me tells me thou shalt, I get thee with *scambling* †, and thou must, therefore, needs prove a good soldier-breeder—Shall not thou and I, between St. Dennis and St. George, compound a boy half French, half English, that shall go to Constantinople, and take the Turk by the beard? Shall we not? What say'st thou, my fair *Flower-de-Luce*.

Catharine. I do not know dat.

Henry. No, 'tis hereafter to know, but now to promise. Do but now promise, Kate, you will endeavour for your *French* part of such a boy; and, for my *English* moiety, take the word of a king and a bachelor. How answer you, le *plus belle Catharine du monde, mon tres chere Et divine deesse*?

Catharine. Your majestee ave fause French enough to deceive de most sage damoisel ‡ dat is *en France*.

Henry. Now, fy upon my false French; by mine honour, in true English, I love thee, Kate; by which honour I dare not swear thou lovest me; yet my blood begins to flatter me that thou dost, notwithstanding the poor and untempting effect of my visage. Now, beshrew my father's ambition, he was thinking of civil wars when he got me; therefore was I created with a stubborn outside, with an aspect of iron, that when I come to woo ladies, I fright them; but in faith, Kate, the elder I wax, the better I shall

* *Le*, for *la*. Henry is made to speak false French, throughout, to humour Kate's false English.

† *Scambling*, riotously—Alluding to the war which was the prelude to his courtship.

‡ I have spelt the word as I found it in the Text.

appear. My comfort is, that old age, that ill layer up of beauty, can do no more spoil upon my face. Thou hast me, if thou hast me, at the worst; and thou shalt wear me, if thou wear me, better and better; and therefore, tell me, most fair Catharine, will you have me? Put off your maiden blushes, avouch the thoughts of your heart, with the looks of an empress; take me by the hand, and say, Harry of England, I am thine; which word thou shalt no sooner blest mine ear withal, but I will tell thee aloud, England is thine, Ireland is thine, France is thine, and Henry Plantagenet is thine; who, though I speak it before his face, if he be not fellow with the best king, thou shalt find the best king of good fellows. Come, your answer in broken music; for thy voice is music, and thy English broken—Therefore, queen of all, Catharine, break thy mind to me in broken English, wilt thou have me?

Catharine. Dat is as it shall please *le roy mon pere*.

Henry. Nay, it will please him well, Kate—It shall please him, Kate.

Catharine. Den it shall also content me.

Henry. Upon that I kiss your hand, and call you my queen.

Catharine. *Laissez, mon Seigneur, laissez, laissez—Ma foy, je ne veux point que vous abaissez vostre grandeur, en baisant la main de votre indigne serviteur**; excusez moy, je vous supplie, mon tres puissant Seigneur.

Henry. Then I will kiss your lips, Kate.

Catharine. *Les dames & demoiselles ne faut pas estre baisees devant leur nopces—Il n'est pas la coutume de France.*

Henry. Madam my interpreter, what says she?

Lady. Dat it is not be de fashion *pour les ladies of France*—I cannot tell what is *baiser, en English*.

Henry. To kiss, *Mademoiselle*.

Lady. Your majesty *entendre* better *que moy*.

Henry. 'Tis not a fashion for the maids of France to kiss, before they are married, would she say?

Lady. *Ouy, vrayement.*

Henry. O, Kate, nice customs curtsie to great folks. Dear Kate, you and I cannot be confined within the weak list of a country's fashion—We are the makers of manners, Kate; and the liberty † that follows our places, stops the mouth of all find-faults; as I will do yours for the upholding the nice fashion of your country, in denying me a kiss—Therefore—patiently, and yielding—[*Kissing h.r.*] You have witchcraft in your lips, Kate; there is more eloquence in a touch of them, than in all the tongues of

* There is no such modern French word, in the feminine gender.

† The privileges, or authority of superior rank.

the French council ; and they would sooner persuade Harry of England, than a general petition of monarchs. Here comes your father.

In the last passage of the foregoing dialogue, Henry affords a good subject for reflection, where he speaks of the powerful influence of kings over the manners of a people. The maxim appears to be plausible, but is not true, in every respect. *Rank and example* alone, will not be sufficient for this effect, unsupported by *dignity and precept*. It is not enough for a prince to act well himself, and intend well to morals—He must form a purpose for their support, and be active in his general, as well as private, capacity. A sovereign, indeed, has it in his power, whenever it is in his will, most effectually to encourage virtue, and discourage vice, if he chuses to make this object the rule of his polity. This would be the surest and safest method of rendering himself absolute ; for as poor Cardinal Wolsey says—upon a maxim too late discovered—

“ Corruption wins not more than honesty.”

Religion itself has judged it necessary to hold out distant rewards and punishments, to allure and deter mankind, and kings can only have a right to be stiled the vice-gerents of Heaven, when they render these sanctions more immediate. A king is said to have long hands ; but they are of no use except to wrap himself up, *while he keeps them folded*.

Lewis the Fourteenth happily brought such a *golden age* to bear, toward the latter part of his illustrious reign, if we may give credit to what St. Evremond says, in a letter of his to Ninon de l'Enclos.

“ You live in a country where people have extraordinary advantages towards saving their souls.
 “ There, vice is almost as much against the fashion,
 “ as against virtue. Sinning passes for ill-breeding ;
 “ shocks decency, and offends good manners, as
 “ much as religion. Formerly, it sufficed to be
 “ wicked ;

“ wicked ; but, at present, one must be a scoundrel,
“ to be damned, in France. They who have not
“ regard enough for another life, are led to salva-
“ tion by the consideration and duties of this.”

In order to leave the impression of this most interesting and moral reflection more strongly on the minds of the great, the powerful, and the opulent, I shall here conclude my observations on this Piece, so fruitful of example and document, throughout.

HENRY the SIXTH.

FIRST PART.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HENRY THE SIXTH.

DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, Protector, and Uncle to the King.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, Cardinal, and Great Uncle to the King.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET, afterwards Duke of York.

DUKE OF SOMERSET.

DUKE OF ALANSON, A French Peer,

MORTIMER, Earl of March.

EARL OF WARWICK.

EARL OF SUFFOLK.

LORD TALBOT.

W O M E N.

None are brought upon the Scene, throughout the few remarks I have had any opportunity of making on this Play.

HENRY the SIXTH.

FIRST PART.

ACT I. SCENE I.

WINCHESTER, speaking of the death of Henry the Fifth :

He was a king, blest of the King of Kings.
Unto the French the dreadful judgment day
So dreadful will not be, as was his fight ;
The battles of the Lord of Hosts he fought—
The Church's prayers made him so prosperous.

We may remember in the former Play, that Henry the Fifth, like a true Christian hero, imputes all his successes immediately to Heaven; but the good Bishop, I am sorry to say it, like a true priest, *of those days*, here interposes between them, and attributes his prosperity solely to the mediation of the Church.

SCENE V.

There is a good description given of the common English, in the following speech :

Alanson. They want their porridge, and their fat bull-beeves ;
Either they must be dieted, like mules,
And have their provender tied to their mouths,
Or piteous they will look, like drowned mice.

A true physical knowledge is here expressed. A great part of personal courage depends upon the animal spirits ; and to keep men stout, you must keep them strong. If philosophy should be so difficult as to deny that good feeding can render a soldiery more brave, it must admit, however, that it will render it more serviceable, at least ; which is all that we mean to contend for here.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE V.

The partiality which we are all apt to manifest towards our own interests, is well noted in this place. This principle is so powerful in human nature, that it not only engages our affections, but warps our judgments also; so that it often imposes on our reason, and frequently makes us continue obstinate, more from error than selfishness. Our opinions differ, even in matters of no concernment to us; and how much less is it to be expected, that we should be of accord, when we are become a party in the question ourselves?

Somerfet and Plantagenet being engaged in a warm dispute, appeal to the umpirage of a third indifferent person, with all the seeming candor imaginable.

Somerfet. Judge you, my lord of Warwick, then, between us.

Warwick. Between two hawks, which flies the higher pitch,
Between two dogs, which hath the deeper mouth,
Between two blades, which bears the better temper,
Between two horses, which doth bear him best,
Between two girls, which hath the merriest eye,
I have, perhaps, some shallow spirit of judgment;
But in these nice sharp quilllets of the law,
Good faith, I am no wiser than a daw.

Plantagenet. Tut, tut, here is a mannerly forbearance.

*The truth appears so naked, on my side,
That any purblind eye may find it out.*

Somerfet. And on my side, it is so well apparelled,
So clear, so shining, and so evident,
That it will glimmer through a blind man's eye.

SCENE VI.

There is something extremely moving, in the first part of this Scene, which shews a prison from whence old Earl Mortimer is brought forth in a chair, before the gates, attended by his gaolers. He had been unfortunately declared heir to the Crown, by Richard the Second, and was therefore kept a prisoner

prisoner of State, during the reigns of Henrys the Fourth and Fifth, and continued still in confinement, under the present king also.

We are naturally more affected at the distresses of age, infancy, or women, than with what we see suffered by the adult or robust unfortunate. Our compassion rises in proportion to the weakness of the victim, as we become sensible of the inability of resistance, along with the weight of the oppression.

The earnest desire which the unhappy old man expresses here, for the relief of death, is very natural to a person in his circumstances; and can by no means be deemed reprehensible, in such a situation, when the completion of the wish is not forwarded by any act of violence or impatience in the sufferer.

Mortimer. Kind keepers of my weak decaying age,

Let dying Mortimer here rest himself—

Even like a wretch new haled from the rack,

So fare my limbs with long imprisonment;

And these grey locks, the *pursuivants of death*,

Nestor-like aged in an age of care,

Argue the end of hapless Mortimer.

These eyes, like lamps whose wasting oil is spent,

Wax dim, as drawing to their exigent*.

Weak shoulders over-born with burdening grief,

And pithless arms like to a withered vine,

That drops his sapless branches to the ground.

Yet are these feet, whose strengthless stay is numb,

Unable to support this lump of clay,

Swift-winged with desire to get a grave;

As witting I no other comfort have.

The first expression above, of *kind keepers*, is most tenderly affecting—A noble and a gallant mind is here represented as being so subdued by the hardness of its condition, as to be reduced to the mortifying necessity of soothing and temporizing with the vile ministers of cruelty and oppression! A sad object this, indeed!

* *Exigent*—*End*. We meet with the word no where, in this sense, but here.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Here is given a description of the qualifications which had intitled the first Knights of the Garter to that honourable mark of distinction, upon the original institution of the Order; a respect to which has been ever since so *minutely* attended to, that *the same dresses, badges, and vows of chivalry*, have been still preserved free from all violation. The character likewise, we are surely to suppose, has been as critically regarded.

Talbot, to the King and Princes, upon an arraignment of *Sir John Fastolfe**, Knight of the Garter, for cowardice:

When first this Order was ordained, my lords,
 Knights of the Garter were of noble birth;
 Valiant and virtuous, full of haughty courage;
 Such as were grown to credit by the wars;
 Not fearing death, nor shrinking for distress,
 But always resolute in most extremes.
 He then that is not furnished in this sort,
 Doth but usurp the sacred name of Knight,
 Prophaning this most honourable Order;
 And should, if I were worthy to be judge,
 Be quite degraded, like a hedge-born swain,
 That doth presume to boast of gentle blood.

ACT V. SCENE II.

The following reflection has too often been made, both before and since the æra here pointed out. It is shocking to humanity, as well as to religion, to think that there should ever have been, and should still continue, such frequent occasions to repeat it.

King. I always thought,
 It was both impious, and unnatural,
 That such immanity and bloody strife
 Should reign among professors of one faith.

In the same Scene, when the king is urged to think of marrying, he very properly objects to the

* This is not our quondam merry Knight, though the near resemblance of the names, and pusillanimity of the characters, might possibly render the person equivocal to the reader.

proposal,

propofal, both on account of his youth, and the neceffity of applying his mind to the ftudies becoming his rank and fituation.

King. Marriage? Alas! my years are yet too young;
And fitter is my ftudy and my books,
Than wanton dalliance with a paramour.

Such confiderations, it feems, were regarded in thofe days, and in the time of our Author likewife, or he would not have commented on the fubject. Are we grown wifer?

SCENE VIII.

This fame topic of matrimony is fully difcuffed, and in a more general and liberal manner, in the prefent Scene, upon Exeter's objecting to the match propofed, on account of the Princefs mentioned not being fufficiently endowed with fortune.

Suffolk. A dower, my lords! Difgrace not fo your king,
That he fhould be fo abject, bafe, and poor,
To chufe for wealth, and not for perfect love.
Henry is able to enrich his queen,
And need not feek a queen to make him rich.
So worthlefs peafants bargain for their wives,
As market-men for oxen, fheep, or horfe.
*But marriage is a matter of more worth,
Than to be dealt in by attorney-ſhip.*
Not whom we will, but whom his grace affects,
Muſt be companion of his nuptial bed.
And therefore, lords, fince he affects her moſt,
It moſt of all thefe reaſons bindeth us,
In our opinions ſhe ſhould be preferred;
*For what is wedlock forced, but a hell,
An age of difcord and continual ſtriſe?
Whereas the contrary bringeth forth blifs,
And is a pattern of celeſtial peace.*

Theſe arguments are certainly conclufive, in private life; and if *reaſons of ſtate* may be allowed to ſtand againſt them, in the ſupremeſt rank, I ſhall only conclude my remarks on this Piece, with a line of an old ſong, in favour of our natural and chartered liberties,

“ If fo happy's a miller, then who'd be a king !”

H E N R Y the S I X T H,

S E C O N D P A R T.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HENRY the Sixth.

DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, Uncle to the King.

CARDINAL BEAUFORT, Bishop of Winchester, Great
Uncle to the King.

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

DUKE OF SOMERSET.

EARL OF SALISBURY.

EARL OF WARWICK.

W O M E N.

None appear in any of the Scenes here noted.

HENRY the SIXTH.

SECOND PART.

ACT II. SCENE I.

THE King and Gloucester returned from hawking :

King. But what a point, my lord, your faulcon made,
And what a pitch she flew above the rest—
To see how God in all his creatures works !
Yea man and birds are fain of climbing high.

Here the king has made a philosophic reflection on the aspiring but commendable nature of man ; which is improved with a religious sense in the reply :

Gloucester. My lord, 'tis but a base ignoble mind,
*That mounts no higher than a bird can soar **.

SCENE III.

When a charge has been exhibited against the duchess of Gloucester, for treason and forcery, the Cardinal, a declared enemy to the duke her husband, takes occasion to insult him upon this misfortune ; to which he thus answers :

Gloucester. Ambitious churchman ! leave to afflict my heart !
Sorrow and grief have vanquished all my powers ;
And, vanquished as I am, I yield to thee,
Or to the meanest groom.

* This passage seems to be an imitation of a Latin sentence I have somewhere met with, and venture to quote from memory only---*Spes aquilas superavolat* ; Hope soars beyond an eagle's flight.

I do not mean to adduce this instance, in order to support an opinion of Shakespeare's learning ; but merely to shew that good wits may sometimes fly, as well as jump together. The severest critic may surely pardon a play on words, in a comment upon so sportive an author. It would be an invidious reflection on our poet's fame, to suppose him to have been a scholar. A genius lends thoughts, a scholar but borrows them.

The above is one of Shakespeare's just delineations of human nature. That spirit which could not be subdued by any personal difficulty or danger, becomes suddenly abated, on the mortification arising from the shame and vice of one so nearly and dearly allied to him.

I have been much obliged, throughout this Work, to the Commentators, for not having noted many such passages as this. They have rarely touched upon our Author's anatomy of human nature, contenting themselves, like sculptors, or painters, with only marking its outward form, its colours and proportions; the veins, arteries, and finer capillaries of the inward man, remaining often undisturbed.

SCENE VII.

Here the good duke, upon the occasion of his wife's ignominy and penance, makes a reflection on the general nature of human life, which he illustrates with an apt allusion :

Gloucester. Thus sometimes hath the brightest day a cloud ;
And after summer evermore succeeds
The barren winter, with his nipping cold ;
So cares and joys abound, as seasons fleet.

Just after this, he speaks of the unhappy woman with a moving tenderness ; and concludes his speech with a description frequently given by Shakespeare, of the base nature of the whiffling multitude :

Unneath * may she endure the flinty streets,
To tread them with her tender feeling feet—
Sweet Nell, ill can thy noble mind a-brook
The abject people gazing on thy face,
With envious looks still laughing at thy shame,
That erst did follow thy proud chariot wheels,
When thou didst ride in triumph through the streets.

A C T III. SCENE VII.

The following passage needs no comment.

King. What stronger breast-plate than a heart untainted ?
Thrice is he armed, that hath his quarrel just ;

* *Unneath*, hardly, or scarcely ; a Saxon or Norman adverb.

And

And he but naked, though locked up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

SCENE X.

This whole scene is so justly commended by all the critics, that I shall give it to the Reader intire.

The King, Salisbury, and Warwick, standing by the Cardinal, on his sick-bed.

King. How fares my lord? Speak, Beaufort, to thy sovereign.

Cardinal, raving.

If thou beest Death, I'll give thee England's treasure,
Enough to purchase such another island,
So thou wilt let me live, and feel no pain.

King. Ah, what a sign it is of evil life,
Where death's approach is seen so terrible!

Warwick. Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks to thee.

Cardinal. Bring me unto my trial, when you will.

Died he not in his bed*? Where should he die?

Can I make men live, whether they will or no?

Oh, torture me no more, I will confess—

Alive again? Then shew me where he is;

I'll give a thousand pounds to look upon him—

He hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded them—

Comb down his hair—look! look! it stands upright,

Like lime-twigs set to catch my winged soul—

Give me some drink, and bid the apothecary

Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.

King. O thou Eternal Mover of the Heavens,

Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!

O beat away the busy meddling fiend,

That lays strong siege upon this wretch's soul,

And from his bosom purge this black despair!

Warwick. See how the pangs of death do make him writhe!

Salisbury. Disturb him not—let him pass peaceably.

King. Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure be!—

Lord Cardinal, if thou think'st on Heaven's bliss,

Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope—

He dies, and makes no sign!—O God, forgive him.

Warwick. So bad a death argues a monstrous life.

King. Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.

Close up his eyes, and draw the curtain close,

And let us all to meditation.

* Raving of Humphrey, whom he had caused to be murdered.

The above scene closes, very properly, with a truly Christian sentiment, by the King, who is, all through, represented by Shakespeare as a religious, moral, domestic, easy-tempered man ;

*Famed for mildness, peace, and prayer * :*

Just such a prince, whose very goodness, for want of sense and spirit, must ever render the dupe of Ministers, and the sport of Faction.

No document, no example, are so effectual a warning to the mind, as the view of a wicked person in his last moments. This speaks to the heart, as well as to the understanding. We then see things and actions in their true light, which the false glare of gain or pleasure, or the involved and complicated nature of sin, are but too apt to hide from our notice. Vice would disgust even those that practise it, if they did not use arts to conceal the vileness of it from their own view. We drink liquors out of a cup, which are too foul to bear a glass.

He who has betrayed a friend, deceived a mistress, wronged the orphan, or oppressed the poor, must surely never have seen a penitent on his death-bed ! What desperate madness, then, must it be, ever to do a deed, for any advantage in life, which after so short—*so very short*—a space of time, we would give a galaxy of worlds to have undone again !

This is the only way of rendering dramatic deaths profitable to the spectators. All the pantomime contortions, writhings, and flouncings, of modern representations, cannot possibly produce such an effect on the audience, as this single expression, *He dies, and makes no sign*.

ACT IV. SCENE VIII.

King. Was ever king that joyed an earthly throne,
And could command no more content than I ?
No sooner was I crept out of my cradle,

* Third Part.

But I was made a king at nine months old.
 Yet never subject longed to be a king,
 As I do long and wish to be a subject.

Shakespeare lays hold of every occasion that fairly presents itself, to put his readers out of conceit with greatness. And, in truth, the state of kings in general, even the happiest of them, who are undoubtedly *those whose power is limited*, is not much to be envied. Their public care, if they rule alone, or their private hazard, if they depute the helm, must deny them ease, the only foundation for earthly happiness or enjoyment to rest upon. Kings may, in some sort, be compared to Popish idols, which are worshipped and led about in pageant procession, for the purpose of procuring some partial wish of the people; which if not obtained, however unreasonable the petition, they are then scourged, and laid by in disgrace.

HENRY THE SIXTH.

T H I R D P A R T .

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HENRY THE SIXTH.

EARL OF RICHMOND, a Youth, afterwards Henry the Seventh.

LORD RIVERS, Brother to the Lady Gray, Wife to Edward Duke of York, afterwards Edward the Fourth.

LORD CLIFFORD.

LORD HASTINGS.

W O M E N.

MARGARET OF ANJOU, Queen to Henry the Sixth.

LADY GRAY, Wife to Edward Duke of York, afterwards Queen.

HENRY the SIXTH.

THIRD PART.

MR. Theobald suspects the three parts of this Drama to be spurious, on account of some obsolete expressions in them, *alder-lievest*, *unneath*, *mailed*, *me-seemeth*, *darraign*, *exigent*, *a-brook*, &c.*; and Doctor Warburton is of the same opinion, from the want of spirit and effect in the composition. If I was to offer an objection to the authenticity of these Pieces, it should be rather from their barrenness of sentiment, or reflection; though I think there is enough of the stile and manner of Shakespeare, in them all, to evince them to be his.

ACT II. SCENE III.

There is a natural instinct, even stronger than that of self-preservation, implanted in all the brute creation for the safety of their young – The simplest animals manifest an art, and the most pusillanimous shew a courage, in the defence of their progeny; but this, only till they become capable of taking care of themselves. Account for this Providence, upon the principle of uninspired *mechanism*, if ye can, ye *unphilosophic* Sophisters!

Clifford. *Unreasonable* † creatures feed their young;
And though man's face be fearful to their eyes,

* Mr. Theobald does not enumerate the words, but I have taken this task upon me, in order to give the fullest force to his criticism. The Antients have left us an humane maxim, *that we should never speak ill of the dead*. I think we should carry this moral even further, *by doing them every justice in our power*. What has particularly induced me to make this remark, is, that Doctor Johnson says he can observe but two expressions of the old phraseology, throughout these three Plays. I do not mean to make any comparison between the sense, knowledge, or literature of these two critics; but Dr. Johnson is alive, to answer for himself, and poor Theobald must now speak by another's tongue.

† *Irrational*.

Yet,

Yet, in protection of their tender ones,
 Who hath not seen them, even with those wings
 Which sometimes they have used with fearful flight,
 Make war with him that climbs unto their nest,
 Offering their own lives in their young's defence ?

S C E N E VI.

The ease and security of the subject is finely contrasted with the anxiety and danger of the Prince, in one of our Author's oft-repeated reflections upon this subject, in a soliloquy made by the King reclining on a hillock, during the warfare between the houses of York and Lancaster.

Would I were dead, if God's good will were so !
 For what is in this world, but grief and woe ?
 O God ! methinks it were a happier life,
 To be no better than a homely swain ;
 To sit upon a hill, as I do now,
 To carve out dials quaintly, point by point ;
 Thereby to mark the minutes as they run,
 How many make the hour * full compleat,
 How many hours bring about the day,
 How many days will finish up the year,
 How many years a mortal man may live,
 When this is known, then to divide the time ;
 So many hours must I tend my flock,
 So many hours must I take my rest,
 So many hours must I contemplate,
 So many hours must I sport myself ;
 So many days my ewes have been with young,
 So many weeks ere the poor fools will yeau,
 So many months ere I shall shear the fleece ;
*So minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years,
 Past over, to the end they were created,
 Would bring white hairs unto a quiet grave.*
 Ah ! what a life were this ! how sweet, how lovely !
 Gives not the haw-thorn bush a sweeter shade
 To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,
 Than doth a rich-embroidered canopy
 To kings that fear their subjects' treachery ?
 O yes, it doth—a thousand-fold it doth.
 And to conclude, the shepherd's homely curd,
 His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
 His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,

* Throughout this speech, and many other places, our Author uses *hour* as a word of two syllables.

All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,
 Is far beyond a prince's delicates,
 His viands sparkling in a golden cup,
 His body couched on a curious bed,
 When care, mistrust, and treasons wait on him.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

Upon the occasion of Queen Margaret and Warwick's going to France, one to solicit the aid of Lewis for Lancaster, and the other for York, poor Henry makes a very natural reflection, foreboding how the ballance will probably incline, where interest holds the scales between two supplicants, whereof one has only something *to ask*, and the other something *to proffer*.

King. My queen and son are gone to France for aid ;

And, as I hear, the great commanding Warwick

Is thither gone to crave the French king's sister

To wife for Edward. If this news be true,

Poor queen and son ! your labour is but lost ;

For Warwick is a subtle orator,

And Lewis a prince soon won with moving words.

By this account, then, Margaret may win him ;

For she's a woman to be pitied much ;

Her sighs will make a battery in his breast,

Her tears will pierce into a marble heart,

The tyger will be mild, while she doth mourn,

And Nero would be tainted with remorse,

To hear and see her plaints, her brinish tears.

Ay, but she's come to beg—Warwick to give ;

She, on his left side, craving aid for Henry ;

He, on his right, asking a wife for Edward.

She weeps, and says, her Henry is deposed ;

He smiles, and says, his Edward is installed ;

That she, poor wretch, for grief can speak no more,

While Warwick tells his title, smooths the wrong,

Inferreth arguments of mighty strength,

And, in conclusion, wins the king from her,

With promise of his sister, and what else,

To strengthen and support king Edward's place.

O Margaret, thus 'twill be, and thou, poor soul,

Art then forsaken, as thou went'st forlorn.

In the same Scene, this unhappy Prince, who appears, throughout, to be more fit for a subject, than

X

a king,

a king, and yet not the less fit to be the latter, *for this very reason*, replies with philosophy and virtue to the person who is going to take him prisoner, and who asks him,

But if thou be a king, where is thy crown ?

King. My crown is in my heart, not on my head ;
Not decked with diamonds and Indian stones ;
Not to be seen ; my crown is called *Content*—
A crown it is that seldom kings enjoy.

In the last line we may see that Shakespeare takes one of his many occasions to humble ambition, and depreciate greatness. He is eternally acting the part of the slave placed behind the triumphal car ; not, indeed, to shew his own envy, but to abate another's pride.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The true policy of England, with regard to all foreign states, is given here, in a very few words ; with a particular hint of ministerial prudence, respecting all leagues or treaties with France.

Hastings. 'Tis better *using* France, than *trusting* her.
Let us be backed with God, and with the seas,
Which he hath given for fence impregnable,
And with their helps alone defend ourselves—
In them, and in ourselves, our safety lies.

SCENE V.

After the observation above made, in the Third Scene, Act II. upon the fond instinct of all irrational animals for the preservation of their brood, it would be unjust, as well as unphilosophic too, not to pay a like compliment to our own species, by quoting a passage in this Scene, where the wife of Edward the Fourth marks the same kind of tenderness and attention, in a becoming manner, upon hearing that her husband has been made prisoner by Warwick.

Rivers. These news, I must confess, are full of grief,
Yet, gracious madam, bear it as you may ;
Warwick may lose, that now hath won the day.

Queen.

Queen. 'Till then fair hope must hinder life's decay.

And I the rather wean me from despair,
For love of Edward's offspring in my womb.
This is't that makes me bridle in my passion,
And bear with mildness my misfortune's cross.
Ay, ay, for this I draw in many a tear,
And stop the rising of blood-sucking sighs,
Left with my sighs or tears I blast or drown
King Edward's fruit, true heir to England's crown.

S C E N E VII.

Here Shakespear takes an occasion, by the means of an *ex post facto* prophecy, to pay a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, resembling the *Tu Marcellus eris* of Virgil to Livia.

The King, to Richmond, laying his hand on his head.

Come hither, England's hope—If secret powers
Suggest but truth to my divining thoughts,
This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss.
His looks are full of majesty,
His head by nature formed to wear a crown,
His hand to wield a scepter, and himself
Likely in time to bless a regal throne.
Make much of him, my lords, for this is he
Must help you more, than you are hurt by me.

This Earl of Richmond was afterwards Henry the Seventh, and united the two houses of York and Lancaster in his own person. He was grandfather to Queen Elizabeth.

A C T IV. S C E N E VII.

I shall here conclude my remarks on this Play, with a truth which is not the less worth attending to for being spoken by a villain; as this character might have but the better enabled him to ascertain the fact.

Gloucester. Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind—
The thief doth fear each bush an officer.

RICHARD THE THIRD.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard the Third.

EARL OF RICHMOND, afterwards Henry the Seventh.

EDWARD, Prince of Wales, } Sons to Edward the
RICHARD, Duke of York, } Fourth.

MARQUIS OF DORSET, Son to the Queen of Edward the Fourth, by her former Husband.

LORD STANLEY.

LORD HASTINGS.

BISHOP OF ELY.

BRACKENBURY, Lieutenant of the Tower.

SIR JAMES TYRREL.

SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF.

W O M E N.

QUEEN of Edward the Fourth.

LADY ANNE, Widow of the Prince of Wales, Son to Henry the Sixth.

DUCHESS OF YORK, Mother to Richard the Third.

COUNTESS OF RICHMOND, Mother to the Earl of Richmond, and Wife to Lord Stanley.

RICHARD the THIRD.

ACT I. SCENE I.

EVERY representation, either of a scene or season of peace, is peculiarly soothing to the human mind. 'Tis its own most natural and pleasing state. But when it is contrasted with the opposite condition of tumult and war, the delight rises infinitely higher. There are many such descriptions as this in Shakespeare; and as the imbuing the mind with such contemplations, must certainly have a moral tendency in it, I am glad to transcribe every passage of the kind I meet with in him.

Richard alone.

Now is the winter of our discontent
 Made glorious summer by this sun of York *,
 And all the clouds that lowered upon our house,
 In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
 Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
 Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,
 Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
 Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
 Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front;
 And, now, instead of mounting barbed steeds,
 To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
 He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber,
 To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.

In the following part of the same speech, our poet, zealous for the honour of the human character, most artfully contrives to make Richard's wickedness appear to arise from a resentment against the partiality of Nature, in having stigmatized him with so deformed a person, joined to an envious jealousy towards the rest of mankind, for being endowed with fairer forms, and more attractive graces. By this

* Edward the Fourth.

admirable address, he moves us to a sort of compassion for the misfortune, even while he is raising an abhorrence for the vice, of the criminal.

Richard. But I that am not shap'd for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass—
I that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty
To strut before a wanton, ambling nymph—
I that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling Nature *,
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up;
And that so lamely and unfashionably,
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them—
Why I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun,
And descant on my own deformity.
And, therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
I am determin'd to prove a villain,
And *bate* † the idle pleasures of these days.

SCENE II.

This long Scene, in which Richard courts Lady Anne, relict of the first Prince of Wales, son to Henry the Sixth, whom he had murdered, is so well known to every one who has ever read or seen this Play, that I need not be at the trouble of transcribing it, though I shall take the liberty of remarking on the very improbable conclusion of it.

Women are certainly most extremely ill us'd, in the unnatural representation of female frailty, here given. But it may, perhaps, be some palliation of his offence, to observe, that this strange fable was not any invention of the poet; though it must indeed be confessed that he yielded too easily a credence to a fictitious piece of history, which rested upon no better authority than the same that affirmed the deformity of Richard; which fact has lately, from a concurrence of cotemporary testimonies, been ren-

* The word *dissembling* is here strained to express *partial*, or *malicious*.

† *Bate*, resign, or scorn, instead of *bate*, which was the word in the text.
Johnson.

dered problematical at least, by a learned and ingenious author*.

The conclusion of the Fifth Scene of Act the Fourth, in this Play, where the Queen, widow of Edward the Fourth, after the death of Lady Anne, promises her daughter to this tyrant and usurper, who had killed her sons, is founded likewise upon the same disingenuous authority with the two former passages.

S C E N E III.

Lord Stanley, upon the Queen's expressing a suspicion that his wife, the countess of Richmond, bears her some ill will, makes her defence, in a speech which would conduce greatly to the peace of our minds, and the preserving many of our most friendly connections unbroken, if properly attended to, and made the rule of our conduct through life.

Stanley. I do beseech you, either not believe
The envious slanders of her false accusers;
Or if she be accused on true report,
Bear with her weakness, which, I think, proceeds
From wayward sickness, and no grounded malice.

The evil report of things said to be spoken to the disadvantage of others, behind their backs, has so frequently been found to proceed either from the malice or mistake of eaves-droppers, listeners, or incendiaries, that it should warn us, upon such occasions, to suspend our resentments against the persons charged, till we find the indictment to be grounded on better evidence than those pests of society, the informers, intermeddlers, or tale-bearers. Besides which, as is above observed, every reasonable allowance ought to be made for the natural frowardness and peevishness of disorder, or other uneasiness of body or mind, which often sets us first at variance with ourselves, before it inclines us to quarrel with others

“ Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
“ Whereunto our health is bound.”

LEAR.

* See a Tract upon this subject, by the Honourable Horatio Walpole.

SCENE V.

Shakespeare is here again at his frequent reflections on the vanity of ambition and the cares of greatness.

Brackenbury. Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,
Makes the night morning, and the noontide night—
Princes have but their titles for their troubles *,
An outward honour for an inward toil;
And for unfelt imaginations,
They often feel a world of restless cares—
So that between their titles, and low name,
There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

ACT II. SCENE II.

When the Queen is lamenting the death of Edward the Fourth, the marquis of Dorset, her son by a former husband, says to her,

Dorset. Comfort, dear mother! God is much displeased,
That with unthankfulness you take his doing.
In common worldly things 'tis called ungrateful,
With dull unwillingness to pay a debt,
Which with a bounteous hand was kindly lent;
Much more to be thus opposite with Heaven;
For † it requires the royal debt it lent you.

Shakespeare is extremely rich in such sentiments of piety and resignation. It is a vast ease to the distressed mind, to communicate its griefs to the ear of a friend, though he can only condole, but not relieve them. How infinitely higher, then, must the comfort rise, to repose them on the bosom of our God, who can not only console, but compensate them! Christ has not taken the *sins* alone, but the *sorrows* also, of mankind upon himself, for those who place their hope and put their trust in him. He not only says, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" but adds this comfort in affliction, "Come unto me, all ye that *labour*, and are *heavy laden*, and I will give ye *rest*."

* *Troubles*, for *glories*, well exchanged by Doctor Johnson.

† *For*, to be understood here in the sense of *because*.

SCENE IV.

There is a natural representation of a distempered state, just preceding a revolution, given in this Scene.

Three citizens, conferring together on the circumstances of the times, hold the following dialogue together.

First Citizen. Come, come, we fear the worst, *all may be well.*

Second Citizen. When clouds are seen, wise men put on their cloaks ;

When great leaves fall, then winter is at hand ;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night ?

Untimely storms make men expect a dearth.

All may be well. But if God fort it so,

'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

Third Citizen. Truly, the hearts of men are full of fear ;

You cannot reason almost with a man,

That looks not heavily, and full of dread.

Second Citizen. Before the days of change, still is it so—

By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust

Ensuing danger ; as by proof we see

The waters swell, before a boisterous storm—

But leave it all to God.

Now nothing can demonstrate the investigating faculties of Shakespeare, more than this passage does. He never lived in any times of commotion himself, therefore the particular knowledge he here shews, in the general nature of such a crisis, must be owing more to philosophy than experience ; rather to his own reflection, than any knowledge of history. I speak with regard to the English writers only, on such subjects ; who were all, before his time, most barren of observation and maxim. And as to the Greek and Roman historiographers, who were rich in both, the invidious Commentators of our Poet have denied him any manner of acquaintance with such *outlandish literati* ; and I also, though from a very different principle, have *joined issue* with them before, in this particular *. For learning gives no

* In a note on Ely's speech, Hen. V. Act I. Scene II.

talents, but only supplies the faculty of shewing them; and this he could do, without any foreign assistance.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The poor unhappy Prince of Wales, successor to Edward the Fourth, makes a reflection here, so becoming the natural spirit of a noble mind, that it must raise a regret in the Reader, that he was not permitted to live and reign over a brave and a free people.

When his wicked uncle Richard appoints the Prince's residence at the *Tower*, till his coronation, he asks who built that fortress? and being told it was Julius Cæsar, he says,

That Julius Cæsar was a famous man :
With what his valour did enrich his wit,
His wit set down to make his valour live.
Death makes no conquest of this conqueror ;
For still he lives in fame, though not in life.

SCENE V.

Richard. My lord of Ely, when I was last in *Holborn*,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there ;
I do beseech you send for some of them.

Ely. Marry, and will, my lord, with all my heart. [*Exit Ely.*]

Could any writer but Shakespeare have ever thought of such a circumstance, in the midst of a deep tragedy, as the sending an old grave Bishop on an errand for a *leaf of strawberries*? and this, in the most formal scene of the Play too, where the lords are met in council, to settle about the day for the coronation?

But could any writer but himself have attempted such a whim, without setting the audience a-laughing at the ridiculousness and absurdity of such an incident? And yet he contrives, some-how or other, to hold us in awe, all the while; though he must be a very ingenious critic, indeed, who can supply any sort of reason for the introduction of such a familiar and comic stroke, upon so serious an occasion. And
what

what renders the solution of this passage still more difficult, is, that the request is made by a person, too, whose mind was deeply intent on murder and usurpation, at the very time.

None of the editors have taken the least notice of this article ; and the first notion that occurred to me upon it, was, that perhaps Richard wanted to get rid of old Ely, after any manner, however indecent or abrupt, in order to be at liberty to plot with Buckingham in private ; for the moment the Bishop goes out on his errand, he says,

Cousin of Buckingham, a word with you.

But as he did not send the rest of the Council-Board a-packing after him, and adjourn them from *the bed of justice* to the *strawberry bed*, but retires immediately himself with his comploter Buckingham, we cannot suppose this idea to have been the purpose intended by so extraordinary a motion.

There is, then, no other way left us to resolve this text, than to impute it solely to the peculiar character that Shakespeare has given us all along of this extraordinary personage ; whom he has represented throughout, as preserving a facetious humour, and exerting a sort of careless ease, in the midst of all his crimes.

I am sorry not to be able to give a better account of this particular, than what I have here offered ; because, if it is to rest upon such a comment, our author must, in this instance, be thought to have betrayed a manifest ignorance in human nature, or the nature of guilt at least ; as no vicious person, I do not mean those of profligate manners merely, but no designing or determined villain was ever chearful, yet, or could possibly be able to assume even the semblance of carelessness or ease, upon any occasion whatsoever.

In the latter part of this Scene, poor Hastings, just before he mounts the scaffold, makes a reflection, which too frequently occurs to those *who put their trust in princes* ; or, indeed, in general, to all who rest their hope on any other stay but their own uprightness and virtue.

Hastings. O momentary grace of mortal men,
Which we more hunt for than the grace of God !
Who builds his hope in air of your fair looks,
Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast,
Ready with every nod to tumble down
Into the fatal bowels of the deep.

ACT IV. SCENE III.

Among the various crimes of man, murder stands in a distinct class above them all ; except, perhaps, suicide, as being of the same species, may be allowed to rank with, or even to exceed, it. The latter part of this position, tho', has been disputed by some moral casuists ; but I shall enter no further into the argument here, than just to observe, that one of these acts does not shock the human mind so much as the other. We are sensible of a tenderness and compassion for the unhappy self-devoted victim, but are impressed both with an horror and detestation against the homicide.

But the circumstance which most eminently distinguishes both of these crimes from every other species of guilt, is their being so wholly repugnant to nature. In other vices, we may suffer a temptation, and have only a moral struggle to conquer ; but one must be trained, be *educated* to these, must stifle sympathy, and overcome our *first*, by a *second* nature.

And of all murders, from the days of *Herod* to these, the killing a child must surely raise a stronger war in the most hardened villain's breast, than the slaughter of an adult. Its innocence, its engaging manners, even its very helplessness, must plead so movingly in its defence, as to render the deed, one should think, impossible ! Might not the idea of a
child's

child's coming so recently out of the hands of its Creator, serve also to impress an additional awe on the mind of the malefactor, at such a time? If superstition can ever be excused for its weakness, it must surely be in such an instance as this.

Shakespeare has wrought up an horrid and affecting picture, in this scene, upon the latter part of this subject, where he makes one of the murderers give an account of the massacre of Edward's two children.

Tirrel. The tyrannous and bloody act is done!

The most arch deed of piteous massacre,

That ever yet this land was guilty of!

Dighton and *Forrest*, whom I did suborn

To do this piece of ruthless butchery,

(Albeit they were flesh villains, bloody dogs),

Melting with tenderness and mild compassion,

Wept like two children in their deaths' sad story.

O thus, quoth *Dighton*, lay the gentle babes—

Thus, thus, quoth *Forrest*, girdling one another

Within their innocent alabaster arms;

Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,

And in their summer beauty kissed each other.

A book of prayers on their pillow lay,

Which once, quoth *Forrest*, almost changed my mind—

But, oh! the devil—There the villain stopt,

When *Dighton* thus told on—We smothered

The most replenished sweet work of nature,

That from the prime creation e'er she framed—

Hence both are gone. With conscience and remorse

They could not speak.

In the latter part of the same Scene is expressed a just and spirited maxim, which, I believe, will be sufficiently vouched by experience, That in difficult matters, quick resolves and brisk actions generally succeed better than slow counsels and circumspect conduct.

Richard, on hearing of the defection of his forces :

Come, I have learned that fearful commenting

Is leaden servitor to dull delay.

Delay leads impotent and snail-paced beggary—

Then fiery expedition be my wing,

Jove's Mercury, and herald for a king.

Go, muster men, my council is my shield,

We must be brief, when traitors brave the field.

SCENE

SCENE IV.

The temporary relief which an opportunity of expressing its sorrows affords to the mind of a person in affliction, is poetically described in a passage here.

The Queen and Dukes of York.

Dukes. Why should calamity be full of words?

Queen. Windy attorneys to their client-woes,
 Airy succeders of *intestate joys**,
 Poor breathing orators of miseries!
 Let them have scope, though what they do impart,
 Help nothing else, yet they do ease the heart.

ACT V. SCENE V.

In this Scene, the adverse camps are supposed to be pitched near each other at night, ready to join battle in the morning; and in the space between, the spirits of all the persons murdered by *Richard* arise, threatening destruction to him, and promising success to *Richmond*. But the ghosts here are not to be taken literally; they are to be understood only as an allegorical representation of those images or ideas which naturally occur to the minds of men during their sleep, referring to the actions of their lives, whether good or bad.

“ Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man,” says Addison, in his *Cato*; and a modern writer, in a poem on the subject of dreams, most emphatically expresses himself thus :

“ Nor are the oppressor’s crimes in sleep forgot ;
 “ He starts appalled, for conscience slumbers not †.”

That this is the sense in which our Poet meant this scene to be accepted, is fully evident from his representing both *Richard* and *Richmond* to have been asleep during the apparition, and therefore capable

* *Intestate joys*. This expression is difficult. The only editor who has taken notice of it, is Theobald; but his comment is as obscure as the text. I shall not attempt it.

† *Something New*, Chap. XLIX.

of receiving those notices in *the mind's eye* only, as Hamlet says; which intirely removes the seeming absurdity of such an exhibition.

The soliloquy of self-accusation, which Richard enters upon alone, immediately after the spectral vision is closed, though so strongly marked, is nothing more than might be supposed natural, in the circumstances and situation of the speaker, as there described.

Richard, starting from his couch.

Give me another horse—bind up my wounds—
Have mercy, Jesu——Soft, I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me?
The lights burn blue—is it not dead midnight?
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh—
What! do I fear myself? there's none else by. . . .
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain. . . .
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng to the bar, all crying, *Guilty! guilty!*
I shall despair—There is no creature loves me;
And if I die, no soul shall pity me.
Nay, wherefore should they? Since even I myself
Find in myself no pity for myself.

Enter Ratcliff.

Richard. Who's there?

Ratcliff. My lord, the early village cock
Hath twice done salutation to the morn;
Your friends are up, and buckle on their armour.

Richard. Ratcliff, I fear, I fear.

Ratcliff. Nay, good my lord, be not afraid of shadows.

Richard. By the apostle *Paul*, shadows, to-night,
Have struck more terror to the soul of *Richard*,
'Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers,
Armed in proof, and led by shallow *Richmond*.

*

*

*

I shall here close my observations on this Play,
with a reflection upon the last paragraph above.

Y

Such

Such is the nature of man, that the slightest alarm, arising from within, discomfits him more than the greatest dangers presenting themselves from without. Body may be overcome by body, but the mind only can conquer itself. Notions of religion are natural to all men, in some sort or other. The good are inspired by devotion, the bad terrified by superstition. The admonitions of conscience are taken for supernatural emotions, and this awes us more than any difficulty in the common course of things. Man has been severally defined a *risible*, a *rational*, a *religious*, and a *bashful* animal. May I take the liberty of adding the farther criterion of his being a *conscientious* one? And this distinction, I shall venture to say, is less equivocal than any of the others.

HENRY the EIGHTH.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HENRY THE EIGHTH.
DUKE OF NORFOLK.
DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.
CARDINAL WOLSEY.
CARDINAL CAMPEIUS, Legate from the Pope.
CAPUCIUS, Ambassador from the Emperor Charles
the Fifth.
LORD CHAMBERLAIN.
LORD SANDS.
SIR THOMAS LOVELL.
CROMWELL, Secretary to Wolsey.
GRIFFITH, Gentleman Usher to Queen Catharine.
GROOM of the Chambers to the Queen.
A MESSENGER.

W O M E N.

QUEEN CATHARINE.
ANNE BULLEN.
PATIENCE, Lady of the Bed-chamber to the Queen.

HENRY the EIGHTH.

ACT I. SCENE I.

AS Cardinal Wolsey stands a distinguished character in history, having raised himself from the meanest origin* to the highest pitch of power, consideration, and station, that a subject could well arrive at, by the sole advantages of learning and natural endowments; and whose end was unfortunate, through vanity, insolence, and the unstable favour of princes; there may be an useful lesson deduced from every circumstance of his life, respecting either his rise, grandeur, or decline.

In a dialogue between Buckingham and Norfolk, in this Scene, the former speaking of his vanity and presumption, with that contempt which persons of *noble families and hereditary fortunes* are sometimes too apt to express towards men *whose whole worth is centered in themselves*, the latter engages in his defence, upon a very just and liberal argument.

Norfolk. Yet, surely, Sir,

There's in him stuff that puts him to these ends;
 For not being propt by ancestry, whose grace
 Chalks successors their way; nor called upon
 For high feats done to the crown; neither allied
 To eminent assistants; but spider-like
 Out of his self-drawing web—This gives us note,
 The force of his own merit makes his way;
 A gift that Heaven gives to him, which buys
 A place next to the king.

Doctor Young treats the same subject in as proper a manner, but with the addition of satire, and ridicule.

“ Let high birth triumph ! What can be more great ?

“ Nothing—but merit in a low estate. UNIVER. PAS.

* He was the son of a butcher.

SCENE II.

The angry Duke repeats his spleen against him in this Scene also, upon the same proud prejudice, or mistaken estimate of things.

Buckingham. A beggar's-book out-worths a noble's blood.

This *most noble and puissant prince* * was unlucky in having lived in such an *ignoble* age—*Nobles* meet with no such mortifications, *now-a-days*.

In the continuation of this dialogue, the impatient spirit of Buckingham is finely contrasted with the calm temper of Norfolk, who illustrates his documents of prudence to him, with equal philosophy and poesy.

The Cardinal had just crossed the Scene, in all his state, casting a look of disdain on Buckingham, which the more raised his choler.

Norfolk. What, are you chafed?

Al: God for temperance; that's the appliance only,
Which your disease requires.

Buckingham. I read in's look,
Matter against me, and his eye reviled
Me, as his abject object; at this instant,
He bores † me with some trick. He's gone to th' king—
I'll follow, and outstare him.

Norfolk. Stay, my lord,
And let your reason with your choler question,
What 'tis you go about. To climb steep hills,
Requires slow pace at first. *Anger is like*
A full-hot horse, who being allowed his way,
Self mettle tires him. Not a man in England
Can advise me, like you—Be to yourself,
As you would to your friend.

Buckingham. I'll to the king,
And from a mouth of honour quite cry down
This *Ipswich* ‡ fellow's insolence; or proclaim
There's difference in no persons.

Norfolk. Be advised;
Heat not a furnace for your foe so hot,

* The stile and title of a Duke.

† I do not comprehend the meaning of this expression, and the Commentators have given me no assistance.

‡ The place of Wolsey's nativity.

That it shall finge yourself. We may out-run,
 By over-swiftness, that which we run at,
 And lose by over-running—Know you not,
 The fire that mounts the liquor 'till 't run o'er,
Seeming to augment, but wastes it? Be advised;
 I say again, there is no English soul
 More stronger to direct you than yourself,
 If with the sap of reason you would quench,
 Or but allay, the fire of passion.

The character which Norfolk here gives to Buckingham of himself, is too common in life: Persons whose sense and judgment are sufficiently qualified to direct others, but who, from the force of passion and indiscretion, are rendered incapable of guiding themselves. *To advise*, and *to be advised*, are by no means the *active* and *passive* of the same verb, as they differ so widely in their *moods* and *tenses*. I have made my apology before*, for such *jeux de mots*, which our Author's stile is apt to lead one into.

SCENE IV.

There is an excellent lesson for kings, given in this place, as well as in many other passages of Shakespeare. The honour and safety of princes are so much confided to the sense and conduct of their Ministers, that such trustees for the State should be ever selected with the nicest judgment and strictest impartiality; in which choice, virtue should be at least *equally* regarded with talents. Were the crown testamentary, a sovereign should be circumspect to whose hands he intrusted the government of his people, even after his death; and how much more solicitous ought he to be, with respect to those appointed to rule, while his own glory and interest lie so immediately at stake!

The great *Condé* complimented *Cornille's* Play of *Cinna*, by stiling it *The Breviary of Kings*—I think that many of Shakespeare's pieces much better deserve that name. But, indeed, his writings may well

* Hen. VI. Part II. Act II. Scene II. The note.

challenge a more general and comprehensive title, and be called the *Manual of Mankind*; as containing rules and reflections for every state and condition of life, throughout the intire compass of human nature, from the peasant to the prince.

The Council Chamber.

The King, the Cardinal, and the Nobles seated. The Queen enters, walks up to the foot of the throne, and kneels before the King, in the quality of a suitor.

Catharine. I am solicited, not by a few,
And those of true condition, that your subjects
Are in great grievance. There have been commissions
Sent down among them, which have flawed the heart
Of all their loyalties; wherein, although,
My good lord Cardinal, they vent reproaches
Most bitterly on you, as putter on
Of these exactions, yet the king, our master,
Whose honour Heaven shield from soil, ever he 'scapes not
Language unmannerly; yea, such which breaks
The fides of loyalty, and almost appears
In loud rebellion.
This makes bold mouths;
Tongues spit their duties out, and cold hearts freeze
Allegiance in them; all their curses, now,
Live where their prayers did; and it's come to pass,
That tractable obedience is a slave
To each incensed will. I would your highness
Would give it quick consideration, for
There is no primer business.

But before we close this Scene, let us shew our impartiality, by suffering the Minister to speak a few words in his own defence; which he does, very well, by urging reflections that have a good deal of truth in them, and shew the danger and difficulty of such a station, even in the best and ablest hands.

Wolsey. If I am traduced by tongues which neither know
My faculties or person, yet will be
The chronicles of my doing, let me say
'Tis but the fate of place, and the rough brake
That virtue must go through We must not stint
Our necessary actions, in the fear
To cope malicious censurers; which ever,

As ravenous fishes do a vessel follow,
 That is new trimmed, but benefit no further
 Than vainly longing. What we oft do best,
 By sick interpreters or weak ones, is
 Not ours, or not allowed ; what worst, as oft,
 Hitting a grosser quality *, is cried up
 For our best act. If we stand still, in fear
 Our motion will be mocked or carped at,
 We should take root here, where we sit, or sit
 State-statues only.

S C E N E VI.

The following Scene must have had an admirable effect, at the time of its first representation ; nor, indeed, is it passed by, even now, without applause from the Pit and Galleries, where the most rational and virtuous part of our audiences are generally seated ; though it may, perhaps, be looked upon but as a remain of our antient barbarism, by the Boxes, among those who have inadvertently chosen to *stigmatize* themselves by a distinction which accidentally took its rise from the very foible here ridiculed ; namely, persons of *Fashion*.

An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter Lord Chamberlain, and Lord Sands.

Lord Chamberlain. Is't possible the spells of France should juggle
 Men into such strange myteries ?

Sands. New customs,
 Though they be never so ridiculous,
 Nay, let them be unmanly, yet are followed.

Chamberlain. As far as I see, all the good our English
 Have got by the last voyage †, is but merely
 A fit or two o' th' face ‡, but they are shrewd ones ;
 For when they hold 'em, you would swear directly
 Their very noses had been counsellors
 'To *Pepin*, or *Clotharius*, they keep state so.

Sands. They've all new legs, and lame ones ; one would take it,
 That never saw them pace, before, the spavin
 And spring-halt reigned among 'em.

* *Quality*, for *conception*.

† When Henry the Eighth went to the congress or interview with Francis the First, between Guisnes and Ardres, with a most sumptuous retinue. ‡ Grimace.

Chamberlain.

Chamberlain. Death, my lord,
 Their cloaths are after such a Pagan cut, too,
 That sure they've worn out Christendom.

Enter Sir Thomas Lovell.

How now?

What news, Sir Thomas Lovell?

Lovell. Faith, my lord,
 I hear of none, but the new proclamation,
 That's clapped upon the court-gate.

Chamberlain. What is't for?

Lovell. The reformation of our travelled gallants,
 That fill the court with *quarrels, talk, and tailors.*

Chamberlain. I'm glad 'tis there—Now I would pray our *Monsieurs*
 To think an *English* courtier may be wise,
 And never see the *Louvre*.

Lovell. They must either,
 For so run the conditions, leave those remnants
 Of fool and feather, that they got in *France*,
 With all their *honourable points of ignorance*,
 Pertaining thereunto, as fights and fire-works,
 Abusing better men than they can be,
 Out of a foreign wisdom, clean renouncing
 The faith they have in *Tennis*, and tall stockings,
 Short bolstered breeches, and such types of travel,
 And understand again like honest men,
 Or pack to their old play-fellows—There, I take it,
 They may, *cum privilegio*, wear away
 The lag-end of their lewdness, and be laughed at.

Sands. 'Tis time to give them phyfic, their diseases
 Are grown so catching.

ACT II. SCENE II.

Here the unhappy Buckingham, in his *last speech*, as it may be called, just before his execution, on recapitulating the vicissitudes and misfortunes of his family, makes proper reflections on the indiscretion of placing a confidence in the fidelity of mean dependants.

Whether it arises from low birth, or base condition of life, which are apt to depress the native vigour of the mind, and render all its principles and ideas servile and selfish, I shall not loiter here to
 make

make an inquisition into ; it being sufficient to the present argument, that the fact itself, from the experience of mankind, affords us but too much authority to pronounce the truth of the observation.

Buckingham. My noble father, *Henry of Buckingham*,
 Who first raised head against usurping *Richard*,
 Flying for succour to his servant *Banister*,
 Being distressed, was by that wretch betrayed.
 Henry the Eighth, life, name, honour, and all
 That made me happy, at one stroke has taken
 For ever from the world.
 Thus far we are one in fortune ; both
 Fell by our servants *, by those men we loved most.
 A most unnatural and faithless service !
 Heaven has an end in all—Yet, you that hear me,
 This from a dying man receive as certain :
 Where you are liberal of your loves and counsels,
 Be sure you are not loose ; those you make friends,
 And give your hearts to, when they once perceive
 The least rub in your fortunes, fall away
 Like water from ye, never found again,
 But where they mean to sink ye. All good people,
 Pray for me ! I must leave ye ; the last hour
 Of my long weary life is come upon me.
 Farewel ; and when you would say something sad,
 Speak how I fell—I've done ; and God forgive me !

I designed to have left off above, at the period in the last line but four, as the speech ended properly there, as far as it related to the argument I had framed upon it ; but I actually felt myself impressed with somewhat like an idea of impiety, to interrupt the speaker, before he had concluded his prayer—I am sensible of a certain refined pleasure, in the sentiment which prompted my pen further on this passage ; however, the *stronger mind* of the Reader may amuse himself at the weakness and superstition of my motive.

S C E N E VI.

The character of Queen Catharine is finely drawn in this Play. A becoming demeanour is preserved

* This Duke was betrayed by his surveyor, chancellor, and confessor.

throughout

throughout every situation and circumstance she is placed in. She discovers that dignity and spirit which become the wife and daughter of a king, shews the duty and obedience which a husband and a sovereign have a right to claim, and speaks, on her own part, with such a noble confidence, as injured innocence may fully warrant. One can never be too much assured, in a just cause, either of their own, or of others; for whoever defends the rights of the oppressed, fights under the banner of Providence.

I shall not interrupt the following dialogues, as far as they relate to her, to point out the passages which may be applied to the several parts of the character above given of her; but, as in former instances of the same kind, in the course of these notes, shall leave the Reader to mark and refer them himself, as he goes along.

Black-Fryers.

The King, with his Bishops, Nobles, &c. assembled in a Council of Inquest, to try the validity of the marriage; where Catharine appears, as summoned on the examination.

Crier. Catharine, Queen of England, come into the court.

The Queen makes no answer, but rising from her seat goes to the king, kneels, and then speaks:

Catharine. Sir, I desire you do me right and justice,
And to bestow your pity on me; for
I am a most poor woman, and a stranger,
Born out of your dominions; having here
No judge indifferent*, and no more assurance
Of equal friendship and proceeding. Alas! Sir,
In what have I offended you? What cause
Hath my behaviour given to your displeasure,
That thus you should proceed to put me off,
And take your good grace from me? Heaven witness,
I've been to you a true and humble wife,
At all times to your will conformable,
Ever in fear to kindle your dislike;
Yea, subject to your countenance, glad or sorry

* *Impartial.*

As I saw it inclined. When was the hour,
 I ever contradicted your desire ?
 Or made it not mine too ? Which of your friends
 Have I not strove to love, although I knew
 He were mine enemy ? What friend of mine,
 That had to him derived your anger, did I
 Continue in my liking ? Nay, gave not notice
 He was from thence discharged ? Sir, call to mind,
 That I have been your wife, in this obedience,
 Upward of twenty years, and have been blest
 With many children by you ; if, in the course
 And process of this time, you can report,
 And prove it too, against mine honour aught,
 My bond of wedlock, or my love and duty,
 Against your sacred person, in God's name,
 Turn me away, and let the foul'st contempt
 Shut door upon me, and so give me up
 To th' sharpest kind of justice. Please you, Sir,
 The king your father was reputed for
 A prince most prudent, of an excellent
 And unmatched wit and judgment. Ferdinand
 My father, king of Spain, was reckoned one
 The wisest prince that there had reigned, by many
 A year before. It is not to be questioned
 That they had gathered a wise council to them,
 Of every realm, that did debate this business,
 Who deemed our marriage lawful. Wherefore, humbly,
 Sir, I beseech you spare me, 'till I may
 Be by my friends in Spain advised ; whose counsel
 I will implore. If not, i' th' name of God,
 Your pleasure be fulfilled !

[*Retes.*]

Wolsey. You have here, lady,
 And of your choice, these reverend fathers, men
 Of singular integrity and learning ;
 Yea, the elect o' th' land, who are assembled
 To plead your cause. It shall be, therefore, bootless
 That longer you defer the court, as well
 For your own quiet, as to rectify
 What is unfettled in the king.

Campeius. His grace
 Hath spoken well and justly ; therefore, madam,
 It's fit this royal session do proceed ;
 And that without delay their arguments
 Be now produced and heard.

Catharine. Lord Cardinal,
 To you I speak.

Wolsey. Your pleasure, madam ?

Catharine.

Catharine. Sir,

I am about to weep ; but thinking that
We are a Queen, or long have dreamed so ; certain,
The daughter of a king ; my drops of tears
I'll turn to sparks of fire.

Wolsey. Be patient yet—

Catharine. I will, when you are humble—Nay, before—

Induced by potent circumstances that
You are mine enemy, I make my challenge*
You shall not be my judge. For it is you
Have blown this coal betwixt my lord and me,
Which God's dew quench ! Therefore, I say again,
I utterly abhor, yea, from my soul,
Refuse you for my judge, whom yet once more
I hold my most malicious foe, and think not
At all a friend to truth.

Here Wolsey enters into a justification of himself, in a long speech, which relates not to the present purpose, in which he demeans himself with great respect toward the Queen, and speaks in his own defence with all seeming moderation and temper—To which she replies :

Catharine. My lord, my lord,

I am a simple woman, much too weak
To oppose your cunning. You are meek, and humble-mouthed ;
You sign † your place and calling, in full seeming,
With meekness and humility ; but your heart
Is crammed with arrogance, spleen and pride.
You have, by fortune, and his highness' favours,
Gone slightly o'er low steps ; and now are mounted,
Where powers are your retainers ; and your words,
Domesticks to you, serve your will as't please
Yourself pronounce their office ‡. I must tell you,
You tender more your person's honour, than
Your high profession spiritual ; that again,
I do refuse you for my judge ; and here,
Before ye all, appeal unto the Pope,
To bring my whole cause 'fore his holiness ;
And to be judged by him.

Here she makes an obeisance to the king, and offers to depart the court.

* Challenge is a law term, for persons on their trial objecting to a Juryman.

* Sign—That is, you make an outward shew of your holy function.

† You have arrived at such an height of power, that you may do and undo, or say and unsay, whatever you please, without control.

Campeius. The queen is obstinate,
Stubborn to justice, apt to accuse it, and
Disdainful to be tried by't—'Tis not well—
She's going away.

Henry. Call her again.

Crier. Catharine, Queen of England, come into the court.

Griffith. Madam, you are called back.

Catharine. What need you note it? Pray you, keep your way—
When you are called, return—Now the lord help!
They vex me past my patience! Pray you, pass on.
I will not tarry—No, nor ever more
Upon this business my appearance make
In any of their courts.

[*Exeunt Queen and her Train.*]

A C T III. S C E N E I.

I shall not prevent the Reader's own feelings and reflections upon this fine and affecting Scene, in which the Queen's character is further displayed, by any remarks of my own upon the several parts of it.

The Queen's Apartment.

The Queen and her Women, as at Work.*

Catharine. Take thy lute, wench, my soul grows sad with troubles;
Singing and disperse them, if thou can'st; leave working. [*Song.*]

Enter Groom of the Chambers.

Catharine. How now?

Groom. An't please your grace, the two great Cardinals
Wait in the presence.

Catharine. Would they speak with me?

Groom. They willed me say so, madam,

Catharine. Pray their graces

To come near. What can be their business
With me, a poor weak woman, fallen from favour?

[*Exit Groom.*]

I do not like their coming. Now I think on't,

* This is an antiquated English Scene, but has been revived again, I hear, by Her Majesty, in the present reign;

“Who shines Penelope, among

“Her chosen female band, who ply

“The needle's art, and fix the flower's perennial dye.”

BELLAMY. *Ethic Amusements.*

They

They should be good men, their affairs † are righteous ;
But all hood, make not monks ‡.

Enter the Cardinals Wolsey and Campeius.

Wolsey. Peace to your highness !

Catharine. Your graces find me here part of a house-wife ;
I would be all, against the worst may happen.
What are your pleasures with me, reverend lords ?

Wolsey. May't please you, noble madam, to withdraw
Into your private chamber ; we shall give you
The full cause of our coming.

Catharine. Speak it here.
There's nothing I have done yet, o' my conscience,
Deserves a corner—'Would all other women
Could speak this with as free a soul as I do !
My lords, I care not, so much I am happy
Above a number, if my actions
Were tried by every tongue, every eye saw them,
Envy and base opinion set against 'em ;
I know my life so even. If your business
Do seek me out, and that way I am wise in *,
Out with it boldly. Truth loves open dealing.

Wolsey. *Tanta est erga te mentis integritas, Regina serenissima—*

Catharine. O, good my lord, no Latin ;
I am not such a truant since my coming,
As not to know the language I have lived in.
A strange tongue makes my cause more strange, suspicious.
Pray, speak in English ; here are some will thank you,
If you speak truth, for their poor mistress' sake.
Believe me, she has had much wrong. Lord Cardinal,
'The willing'† sin I ever yet committed,
May be absolved in English.

Wolsey. Noble lady,
I'm sorry my integrity to you,
And service to his majesty, should breed ‡
So deep suspicion, where all faith was meant.
We come not by the way of accusation,
To taint that honour every good tongue blesses,
Nor to betray you any way to sorrow ;
You have too much, good lady ; but to know
How you stand minded in the weighty difference,

† *Affairs.* Office, profession, or calling.

‡ A literal translation of the latin proverb, *Cucullus non facit monachum.*

* That is, if you are come to examine my title as a wife, or my behaviour under that character. Johnson.

‡ I have ventured to transpose some of the words in these two lines, in order to render the sense more intelligible.

Between the king and you ; and to deliver,
Like free and honest men, our just opinions
And comforts to your cause.

Campeius. Most honoured madam,
My lord of *York* *, out of his noble nature,
Zeal and obedience he still bears your grace,
Forgetting, like a good man, your late censure,
Both of his truth and him, which was too far,
Offers, as I do, in a sign of peace,
His service, and his counsel—

Catharine. To betray me.
My lords, I thank you both for your good wills ;
Ye speak like honest men ; pray God, ye prove so !
But how to make ye suddenly an answer,
In such a point of weight, so near mine honour,
More near my life, I fear, with my weak wit,
And to such men of gravity and learning,
In truth, I know not. I was set at work,
Among my maids ; full little, God knows, looking
Either for such men, or such business,
For her sake that I have been, for I feel
The last fit of my greatness, good your graces,
Let me have time and counsel for my cause.
Alas ! I am a woman, friendless, hopeless !

Wolsey. Madam, you wrong the king's love with those fears.
Your hopes and friends are infinite.

Catharine. In England
But little for my profit ; can you think, lords,
That any English man dare give me counsel ?
Or be a known friend 'gainst his highness' pleasure,
Though he be grown so desperate to be honest,
And live a subject ? Nay, forsooth—My friends,
They that must weigh out † my afflictions,
They that my trust must grow to, live not here ;
They are, as all my comforts are, far hence,
In my own country, lords.

Campeius. I would your grace
Would leave your griefs, and take my counsel.

Catharine. How, Sir ?

Campeius. Put your main cause into the king's protection ;
He's loving, and most gracious. 'Twill be much
Both for your honour better, and your cause ;
For, if the trial of the law o'ertake you,
You'll part away disgraced.

* *Wolsey* was Archbishop of *York*.

† The Editors are at a loss about this expression. *To weigh out* certainly means, here, *to unload*. 'Tis a mercantile phrase for unfreighting a cargo.

Wolsey. He tells you rightly.

Catharine. Ye tell me what ye wish for, both, my ruin—
Is this your christian counsel? Out upon ye!
Heaven is above all yet; there sits a Judge,
That no king can corrupt.

Campeius. Your rage mistakes us.

Catharine. The more shame for you—Holy men I thought ye,
Upon my soul, two reverend cardinal virtues;
But cardinal sins and hollow hearts, I fear you.
Mend them, for shame, my lords. Is this your comfort?
The cordial that you bring a wretched lady?
A woman lost among ye, laughed at, scorned?
I will not wish you half my miseries—
I have more charity. But say I warned ye;
Take heed, take heed, for Heaven's sake, lest at once
The burden of my sorrows fall upon you.

Wolsey. Madam, this is a meer distraction—
You turn the good we offer into envy.

Catharine. Ye turn me into nothing. Woe upon you,
And all such false professors! Would ye have me,
If ye have any justice, any pity,
If ye be any thing but Churchmen's habits,
Put my sick cause into his hands that hates me?
Alas! h' as banished me his bed already;
His love, too, long ago. I'm old, my lords;
And all the fellow-ship I hold now with him,
Is only my obedience. What can happen
To me above this wretchedness! All your studies
Make me a curse like this!

Campeius. Your fears are worse—

Catharine. Have I lived thus long—(let me speak, myself,
Since virtue finds no friends) a wife, a true one?
A woman, I dare say without vain glory,
Never yet branded with suspicion?
Have I, with all my full affections,
Still met the king? loved him next Heaven? obeyed him?
Almost forgot my prayers to content him?
And am I thus rewarded? 'Tis not well, lords.
Bring me a constant woman to her husband,
One that ne'er dreamed a joy beyond his pleasure;
And to that woman, when she has done most,
Yet will I add an honour—*A great patience.*

Wolsey. Madam, you wander from the good we aim at.

Catharine. My lord, I dare not make myself so guilty,
'To give up willingly that noble title

* *Envy*, put for *malice*, or *mischief*.

Your master wed me to ; nothing but death
Shall e'er divorce my dignities.

Wolsey. Pray, hear me——

Catharine. 'Would I had never trod this English earth,
Or felt the flatteries that grow upon it !
Ye've angels' faces, but Heaven knows your hearts——
What shall become of me, now ! wretched lady !
I am the most unhappy woman living.
Alas ! poor wenches, where are now your fortunes ?

[*To her Women.*

Ship-wreck'd upon a kingdom where no pity,
No friends, no hope, no kindred weep for me ;
Almost no grave allowed me. Like the lily,
That once was mistress of the field, and flourished,
I'll hang my head, and perish.

Wolsey. If your grace

Could but be brought to know our ends are honest,
You'd feel more comfort. Why should we, good lady,
Upon what cause, wrong you ? Alas ! our places,
The way of our profession, is against it ;
We are to cure such sorrows, not to sow them.
For goodness' sake, consider what you do ;
How you may hurt yourself ; nay, utterly
Grow from the king's acquaintance, by this carriage.
The hearts of princes kiss obedience,
So much they love it ; but to stubborn spirits,
They swell and grow as terrible as storms.
I know you have a gentle, noble temper,
A soul as even as a calm ; pray, think, think us
Those we profess, peace-makers, friends and servants.

Campeius. Madam, you'll find it so. You wrong your virtues,
With these weak woman's fears. A noble spirit,
As yours was put into you, ever casts
Such doubts, as false coin, from it. The king loves you ;
Beware you lose it not ; for us, if you please
To trust us in your business, we are ready
To use our utmost studies in your service.

Catharine. Do what you will, my lords ; and pray, forgive me,
If I have used myself unmannerly.
You know I am a woman, lacking wit
To make a seemly answer to such persons.
Pray, do my service to his majesty ;
He has my heart, yet, and shall have my prayers,
While I shall have my life. Come, reverend fathers,
Bestow your counsels on me. She now begs,
That little thought, when she set footing here,
She should have bought her dignities so dear.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

The present Scene presents us with a second object of compassion, which though it interests us after a different manner from the former, as neither being so innocent, nor suffering so unjustly; yet, shall I hazard the expression? affects us almost as much. We do not, indeed, feel our minds impressed with such a tender sensibility towards the latter, as the first; but, for the honour and dignity of human nature, let me say, that our commiseration, in the second case, arises from principles of a nobler kind; from our forgiveness of the penitent, and our compassion for his misfortunes, softened still more by our sorrow for his guilt: so that, upon the whole, the generosity of our sentiment, in one instance, nearly equals the sympathy of it, in the other.

The true supputation of the precariousness and instability of all worldly happiness and greatness, with the fit temper and resignation to bear their loss, are most pathetically and poetically set forth, in the following beautiful and affecting scene.

Wolsey, in his disgrace.

Farewel, a long farewel, to all my greatness!
 This is the state of man—To-day he puts forth
 The tender leaves of hopes, to-morrow blossoms,
 And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;
 The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
 And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
 His greatness is a ripening, nips his root,
 And then he falls, as I do. I have ventured,
 Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
 These many summers in a sea of glory,
 But far beyond my depth; my high-blown pride
 At length broke under me, and now has left me,
 Weary and old with service, to the mercy
 Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
 Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye—
 I feel my heart new opened—Oh, how wretched
 Is that poor man, that hangs on Princes' favours!
 There is, between that smile we would aspire to,
 That sweet aspect of princes, and our ruin,
 More pangs and fears than war or women have;
 And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,
 Never to hope again.

Enter

Enter Cromwell, standing amazed.

Why, how now, Cromwell?

Cromwell. I have no power to speak, Sir.

Wolsey. What, amazed

At my misfortunes? Can thy spirit wonder
A great man should decline? Nay, *if you weep,*
I'm fallen indeed.

Cromwell. How does your grace?

Wolsey. Why, well—

Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell.
I know myself, now; and I feel within me
A peace above all earthly dignities;
A still and quiet conscience—The king has cured me;
I humbly thank his grace—and from these shoulders,
These ruined pillars, out of pity taken
A load would sink a navy, too much honour.
O, 'tis a burden, Cromwell, 'tis a burden,
Too heavy for a man that hopes for heaven!

Cromwell. I'm glad your grace has made that right use of it.

Wolsey. I hope I have. I'm able, now, methinks,

Out of a fortitude of soul I feel,
T' endure more miseries, and greater, far,
Than my weak-hearted enemies dare offer.
What news abroad?

Cromwell. The heaviest and the worst,
Is your displeasure with the king.

Wolsey. God blefs him!

Cromwell. The next is, that Sir Thomas More is chosen
Lord Chancellor in your place.

Wolsey. That's somewhat sudden—

But he's a learned man. May he continue
Long in his highness' favour, and do justice,
For truth's sake, and his conscience; that his bones,
When he has run his course, and sleeps in blessings,
May have a tomb of orphans' tears wept on them!
What more?

Cromwell. That Cranmer is returned with welcome;
Installed Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

Wolsey. That's news, indeed.

Cromwell. Last, that the lady Anne,
Whom the king hath in secrecy long married,
This day was viewed in open, as his queen,
Going to chapel; and the voice is now,
Only about her coronation.

Wolsey. There was the weight that pulled me down. O Cromwell !

The king has gone beyond me ; all my glories
In that one woman I have lost for ever.
No sun shall ever usher forth my honours,
Or gild again the noble troops that waited
Upon my smiles. Go, get thee from me, Cromwell,
I am a poor fallen man, unworthy now
To be thy lord and master. Seek the king ;
That sun, I pray, may never set ; I've told him
What and how true thou art ; he will advance thee ;
Some little memory of me will stir him,
I know his noble nature, not to let
Thy hopeful service perish too. Good Cromwell,
Neglect him not, make use now, and provide
For thine own future safety.

Cromwell. O, my lord,
Must I then leave you ? must I needs forego
So good, so noble, and so true a master ?
Bear witness, all that have not hearts of iron,
With what a sorrow Cromwell leaves his lord !
The king shall have my service ; but my prayers,
For ever, and for ever, shall be yours.

Wolsey. Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear,
In all my miseries ; but thou hast forced me,
Out of thy honest truth, to play the woman.
Let's dry our eyes, and thus far hear me, Cromwell ;
And when I am forgotten, as I shall be,
And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention
Of me must more be heard, say then I taught thee,
Say, *Wolsey*, that once rode the waves * of glory,
And founded all the depths and shoals of honour,
Found thee a way out of his wreck, to rise in ;
A sure and safe one, though thy master missed it.
Mark but my fall, and that which ruined me——
Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition ;
By that sin fell the angels ; how can man, then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by't ?
Love thyself last, cherish those hearts that wait † thee ;
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear not.
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's—Then if thou fallest, O Cromwell,

* *Rode the waves*, instead of *trod the waves*, so altered by Warburton, to preserve the metaphor pointed out in the two next lines, *waves*, *depth*, *shoals*, and *wreck*.

† *Wait*, instead of *bare*. Warburton. A more natural, sensible, and political sense of the passage.

Thou

Thou fallest a blessed martyr. Serve the king ;
 And, prithee, lead me in—
 There take an inventory of all I have,
 To the last penny. 'Tis the king's. My robe,
 And my integrity to Heaven, is all
 I dare now call my own. O Cromwell, Cromwell,
 " Had I but served my God, with half the zeal
 " I served my king, he would not in mine age
 " Have left me naked to mine enemies *."

Cromwell. Good Sir, have patience.

Wolsey. So I have. Farewel

The hopes of Court ! *my hopes in Heaven do dwell.*

ACT IV. SCENE II.

Our first great object, before mentioned, is here presented to us again, to charm us with that truly Christian spirit, with which, though deeply suffering under the supposed enmity of Wolsey, she not only forgives him her injuries, but listens to his praise without resentment, and even commends his honest Welch encomiast.

Kimbolton Castle.

Enter Catharine, sick, and led in between Griffith, her Gentleman-Usher, and Patience, her Woman.

Griffith. How does your grace ?

Catharine. O Griffith, sick to death ;

My legs, like loaded branches, bow to the earth,

Willing to leave their burden. Reach a chair—

So—now methinks I feel a little ease. [*Sitting down.*]

Didst thou not tell me, Griffith, as thou led'st me,

That the great child of honour, Cardinal Wolsey,

Was dead ?

Griffith. Yes, madam ; but I think your grace,

Out of the pain you suffered, gave no ear to it.

Catharine. Prithee, good Griffith, tell me how he died—

If well, he slept before me, happily,

For my example.

Griffith. Well, the voice goes, madam.

For after the stout earl of Northumberland

Arrested him at York, and brought him forward,

As a man sorely tainted, to his answer,

He fell sick, suddenly, and grew so ill,

He could not sit his mule.

* This last sentence Wolsey did really speak, as recorded in history.

Catharine.

Catharine. Alas, poor man !

Griffith. At last, with easy roads he came to Lei'ster ;
Lodged in the abbey, where the reverend abbot,
With all his convent, honourably received him ;
To whom he gave these words : " O, father abbot,
" An old man, broken with the storms of state,
" Is come to lay his weary bones among ye.
" Give him a little earth, for charity *."

So went to bed, where eagerly his sickness
Pursued him still ; and three nights after this,
About the hour of eight, which he himself
Foretold should be his last, full of repentance,
Continual meditations, tears, and sorrows,
He gave his honours to the world again,
His blessed part to heaven, and slept in peace.

Catharine. So may he rest ! his faults lie gently on him !
Yet thus far, Griffith, give me leave to speak him,
And yet with charity ; he was a man
Of an unbounded stomach, ever ranking
Himself with princes ; one that by suggestion †
Tied all the kingdom. Simony was fair play—
His own opinion was his law. I' th' presence
He would say untruths, and be ever double,
Both in his words and meaning. He was never,
But where he meant to ruin, pitiful.
His promises were, as he then was, mighty ;
But his performance, as he now is, nothing.
Of his own body he was ill, and gave
The clergy ill example.

Griffith. Noble madam,
Men's evil manners live in brass, their virtues
We write in water. May it please your highness
To hear me speak his good, now ?

Catharine. Yes, good Griffith—
I were malicious else.

Griffith. This Cardinal,
Though from an humble stock, undoubtedly
Was fashioned to much honour ; from his cradle ‡
He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one,
Exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading ;
Lofty and four to them that loved him not,
But to those men that sought him, sweet as summer.
And though he were unsatisfied in getting,
Which was a sin, yet in bestowing, madam,

* These words are likewise recorded of him.

† *Suggestion.* By having the freedom of the king's ear, he had an opportunity of suggesting his own schemes and politics into his mind.

‡ This line is thus pointed in the text, *Was fashioned to much honour from his cradle.* The alteration I have made in the stop, gives the best sense of the passage ; for Wolsey was a remarkable scholar, even in his infancy.

He was most princely. Ever witness for him
 Those twins of learning that he raised in you,
 Ipswich and Oxford ! One of which fell with him,
 Unwilling to outlive the good he did it ;
 The other, though unfinished, yet so famous,
 So excellent in art, and still so rising,
 That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue.
 His overthrow heaped happiness upon him ;
 For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
 And found the blessedness of being little—
 And to add greater honours to his age,
 Than man could give him, *he died fearing God.*

Catharine. After my death I wish no other herald,
 No other speaker of my living actions,
 To keep mine honour from corruption,
 But such an honest chronicler as *Griffith*.
 Whom I most hated living, thou hast made me,
 With thy religious truth and modesty,
 Now in his ashes honour. Peace be with him !
Patience †, be near me still, and set me lower.
 I have not long to trouble thee. Good *Griffith*,
 Cause the musicians play me that sad note
 I named my knell ; whilst I sit meditating
 On that celestial harmony I go to.

[*Sad and solemn music, and a vision of Cherubims while she sleeps.*]

Here the Reader will please to advert to my remark on the vision in Scene the Fifth of the last Act of the preceding Play. This one also was meant by Shakespeare but as an allegorical representation of those beatific dreams, or reveries, which the virtuous mind, and clear conscience, may be supposed sometimes to be inspired with.

Catharine waking.

Bid the music leave,
 'Tis harsh and heavy to me. [*Music ceases.*]

Enter Lord Capucius.

If my sight fail not,
 You should be lord ambassador from the Emperor,
 My royal nephew ; and your name Capucius.

Capucius. Madam, the same ; your servant.

Catharine. O, my lord,
 The times and titles are now altered strangely
 With me, since first you knew me. But, I pray you,
 What is your pleasure with me ?

† The name of her woman.

Capucius.

Capucius. Noble lady,
 First mine own service to your grace ; the next,
 The king's request that I would visit you,
 Who grieves much for your weakness, and by me
 Sends you his princely commendations,
 And heartily intreats you take good comfort.

Catharine. O, my good lord, that comfort comes too late ;
 'Tis like a pardon after execution ;
 That gentle physic given in time, had cured me ;
 But now I'm past all comforts here, but prayers.
 How does his highness ?

Capucius. Madam, in good health.

Catharine. So may he ever do, and ever flourish,
 When I shall dwell with worms, and my poor name
 Banished the kingdom !—*Patience*, is that letter
 I caused you write, yet sent away ?

Patience. No, madam. [*Gives it to her.*]

Catharine. Sir, I most humbly pray you to deliver
 This to my lord the king.

Capucius. Most willing, madam.

Catharine. In which I have commended to his goodness,
 The model of our chaste loves, his young daughter *.
 The dews of Heaven fall thick in blessings on her !
 Beseeching him to give her virtuous breeding,
 (She's young, and of a noble modest nature ;
 I hope she will deserve well) and a little
 To love her for her mother's sake, that loved him,
 Heaven knows how dearly ! My next poor petition,
 Is, that his noble grace would have some pity
 Upon my wretched women, that so long
 Have followed both my fortunes faithfully ;
 Of which there is not one, I dare avow,
 And now I should not lie, but well deserves,
 For virtue and true beauty of the soul,
 For honesty and decency of carriage,
 A right good husband ; let him be a Noble ;
 And sure those men are happy that shall have 'em.
 The last is for my men ; they are the poorest ;
 But poverty could never draw them from me ;
 That they may have their wages duly paid them,
 And something over, to remember me.
 If Heaven had pleased to've given me longer life,
 And abler means, we had not parted thus.
 These are the whole contents. And, good my lord,
 By that you love the dearest in the world,

Afterwards Queen Mary.

As you wish Christian peace to souls departed,
Stand these poor people's friend, and urge the king
To do me this last right.

Capucius. By Heaven, I will ;
Or let me lose the fashion of a man !

Catharine. I thank you, honest lord. Remember me,
In all humility, unto his highness ;
And tell him his long trouble now is passing
Out of this world. Tell him, in death I blest him ;
For so I will—Mine eyes grow dim. Farewel,
My Lord—Griffith, farewel—Nay, *Patience*,
You must not leave me yet. I must to bed—
Call in more women—When I'm dead, good wench,
Let me be used with honour—Strew me over
With maiden flowers, that all the world may know
I was a chaste wife to my grave—Embalm me,
Then lay me forth—Although unqueened, yet like
A queen, and daughter to a king, interr me.
I can no more——

Doctor Johnson has given us his sentiments on this rich and noble passage, in the following words:

“ This scene is above any other part of Shake-
“ speare's Tragedies, and perhaps above any scene
“ of any other poet, tender and pathetic ; without
“ gods, or furies, or poisons, or precipices ; without
“ the help of romantic circumstances ; without im-
“ probable fallies of poetical lamentation ; and with-
“ out any throes of tumultuous misery.”

L E A R.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

LEAR.

ALBANY.

KENT.

GLOSTER.

EDGAR.

EDMUND.

FOOL.

Gentlemen and Attendants.

W O M E N.

GONERIL.

REGAN.

CORDELIA.

Scene lies in Britain.

L E A R.

IT may be necessary to many Readers to premise, that the Piece here under consideration, is the Play as originally written by Shakespeare, left the bearing it in mind as altered by *Tate*, and generally acted so, might occasion confusion or mistakes, in the following notes and observations.

The Critics are divided in their opinions between the original and the altered copy. Some prefer the first, as a more general representation of human life, where fraud too often succeeds, and innocence suffers: others prefer the latter, as a more moral description of what life should be.

But argument in this, as in many other cases, had better be left quite out of the question; for our feelings are often a surer guide than our reason; and by this criterion I may venture to pronounce, that the reader or spectator will always be better pleased with the happy, than the unfortunate, catastrophe of innocence and virtue.

Besides, if Dramatic exhibitions are designed, as they certainly should be, to recommend virtue and discourage vice, there cannot remain the least manner of dispute in our minds, whether Shakespeare or Tate have fulfilled Horace's precept of *utile dulci* the best. However, if *pity* and *terror*, as the Critics say, are the principal objects of Tragedy, surely no Play that ever was written can possibly answer both these ends better than this performance, as it stands in the present text.

The Reader, I hope, will not think that I have exceeded the *line* I had prescribed to myself, in the conduct of this Work, by my hazarding the above criticism, as the subject may be still considered as of
a moral

a moral nature or tendency, and may, therefore, not improperly be comforted with the rest of my remarks upon this estimable author.

* * *

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Kent and Gloster.

Kent. I thought the king had more affected the duke of *Albany*, than *Cornwall*.

Gloster. It did always seem so to us, but, now, in his division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for qualities are so weighed, that curiosity † in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

This is a fine description of a parent's distributive justice, in the division of a fortune between his children. Their claims are all equal in nature, and should be still preserved so in equity, except where particular usages may have obtained, or political laws have made a difference; in which cases, to observe the rule of nature would be a species of injustice.

I speak here with regard to conduct; of principle only, and not of affection; for 'tis often impossible for the most virtuous or impartial parent to refrain from loving one child better than another. A indiscriminate regard, in any case, towards two objects, though ever so much alike or estimable, is unnatural to the most impartial mind; and though our reason should not be able to give a preference, our feelings will.

The oft-disputed *free will* of man may be sufficiently proved from this innate self-determination, which his mind possesses. We must make a choice, even without our being able to make a distinction. It must be an ass, indeed, that can remain in suspense even *between two bundles of hay*. But this involuntary election we are not answerable for in

† Curiosity, for *sensitivy*.

ethics ; we are accountable only for our manner of acting towards our children ; in which their moral merits alone can justify superior marks of preference or favour.

S C E N E II.

Lear And 'tis our fast intent

To shake all cares and business from our age,
 Conferring them on younger strengths ; while we
 Unburdened crawl toward death.

This is a rational, a manly, and a virtuous purpose. But how few are possessed of souls *great* enough to relinquish *greatness* ! Indeed, the rare examples of those who have done so, as Charles the Fifth, and some others, would not encourage one to make the experiment. But then it ought to be enquired into, whether the instances of abdication had been prompted by any of the principles above-mentioned, or no ; for mere fits of devotion, or disgust, are seldom long or strong enough, to support the mind under such a dereliction.

Besides, habit is a most powerful thing ; and persons used to occupation of any kind, are apt to feel an irksome vacuity and weariness in themselves, with an oppressive tediousness of time lying on their hands, whenever they cease from employment. This has been the confession of all the merchants, lawyers, farmers, and physicians, I have ever known, or heard of, who had retired from their professions, or quitted their ordinary scenes of action, late in life. Whenever, therefore, such an experiment is attempted, it should arise from a *principle*, not from a *preference* ; because the choice must be ventured upon, before the comparison can be tried.

In the same Scene, when Lear requires his three daughters to declare the several portions of their love and respect towards him, the eldest addresses herself to him thus :

Goneril. Sir,

I love you more than words can wield the matter,

A a

Dearer

Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty ;
 Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare ;
 No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour ;
 As much as child e'er loved, or father found ;
 A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable,
 Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Upon this speech, the youngest daughter says to herself, aside,

What shall Cordelia do ? Love, and be silent.

After Goneril has had her portion marked out, the second steps forward, in order to earn her's.

Regan. I'm made of that self-metal as my sister,
 And prize me at her worth. In my true heart,
 I find the names my very deed of love,
 Only she comes too short; that I profess
 Myself an enemy to all other joys,
 Which the most precious square of sense possesses,
 And find I am alone felicitate,
 In your dear highness' love.

Here the sincere and unprofessing Cordelia whispers to herself again :

Then poor Cordelia !
 And yet not so, since I am sure my love's
 More ponderous than my tongue.

When Lear has endowed Regan also, he next proceeds to challenge Cordelia upon the same question ; asking her what she has to say, to shew her love equal to her sisters ; her only answer is,

Nothing, my lord.

But, indeed, what was there left for her to say, after such hyperbolical professions as had been just made before her ? However, I dare pronounce, that any reader, who is at all acquainted with human nature, without looking any further into the story, beyond the present scene, must have already determined the point in his own mind, which of the daughter's duties or affections were most to be relied upon.

No passion can either bear or justify exaggeration, but love alone. There the extravagance of transport, and the enthusiasm of devotement, prove the
luxuriance

luxuriance of the soil; but in every other instance betray the *sterility* of it. There is, in reality, no other passion in the human breast, but love. All other affections, such as avarice, duty, envy, revenge, or ambition, arise from some foreign sentiment, are founded on principle, or instigated by vice or pride. These we may be educated, tempted, or provoked to; but the former is a spontaneous and involuntary impulse of the soul, a certain attractive force, that can neither be dictated to us by moral, nor restrained by document.

“ First bid physicians preach our veins to temper,
 “ And with an argument new set a pulse,
 “ Then think of reasoning into love.”

The REVENGE.

S C E N E VI.

Edmund *solus*.

Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
 My services are bound; wherefore should I
 Stand in the plague * of custom, and permit
 The courtesy † of nations to deprive me?

Thus do all profligates, who deserve to be the outcasts of society, betake themselves to the asylum of Nature. Whenever the laws of God or man oppose their vices, they immediately adopt her for their deity and their legislator; whom they cannot fail to find a most indulgent patroness, as they are sure to interpret all their own wills and passions to be her unerring dictates.

Lucretius, the expositor of Epicurus, in his philosophic poem on the nature of things, addresses himself to the same goddess, under the appellation of *VENUS*, whom he makes to precede and supersede the gods, representing them as a set of lethargic beings of

* The Commentators are not agreed upon the sense of this word, in the place where it is here used; but I think that the meaning of it would be sufficiently clear, if it was exchanged for *tyranny*.

† By *courtesy* is meant certain *usages* so filed in the common law of England.

her creation, and leaving them to doze away their immortalities wrapt up in their empyreal *Pantheon*.

The pride of man is amazing ! Rather than acknowledge any Intelligence superior to themselves, they chuse to refer the manifest wisdom and power of the Deity to blind chance, and inert matter alone !

“ And call God’s providence a lucky hit.” POPE.

And yet this can hardly be deemed impious, because ’tis so miserably stupid.

S C E N E VII.

Shakespeare, as I have had opportunities of observing before, takes frequent occasions of representing the horrid condition of a nation under the infliction of a civil war. His descriptions deserve to be collected together into one chapter, as a document both to prince and people; for the warning is equally necessary to each; as, whatever may be the final event, they must be alike sufferers, under such a calamity. For in such a conflict, those are likely to gain most, who have the least to lose. These reflections refer to the following passage in this Scene.

Gloster. Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide. In cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond crack’d ’twixt son and father. We have seen the best of our time. Machinations, hollownests, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves.

S C E N E VIII.

The impious and unphilosophic method that people are too generally apt to apply toward the lightening of their consciences, and relieving their miseries, by imputing their vices and misfortunes to fate, necessity, or the harmless stars presiding at their births, instead of their own wickedness or indiscretions, is well satirized and exposed in the following speech, though it has not, I think, been put into a proper mouth to speak.

Edmund. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that when we are sick in fortune, often the surfeits of our own behaviour, we
make

make guilty of our own disasters the sun, the moon, and stars; as if we were villains on necessity; fools, by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treacherous, by spherical predominance; drunkards, lyars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable evasion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposition on the change of a star!

S C E N E XII.

Kent here gives a good character of a man, in recommending his own services to Lear:

I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgment*; and to fight when I cannot chuse †.

S C E N E XIII.

The following passage comes in here very properly, after the foregoing one; as it gives good and prudent advice for our conduct in life.

Fool. Have more than thou shewest,
 Speak less than thou knowest;
 Lend less than thou owest †,
 Ride more than thou goest:
 Learn more than thou trowest §,
 Set less than thou throwest ||;
 Leave thy drink and thy whore,
 And keep within door;
 And thou shalt have more
 Than two tens to a score ¶.

These maxims should not lose their credit or effect, on account of the character which utters them; for Shakespeare's fools are not those of *modern times*, but speak a great deal of good sense throughout all his Plays. Besides, these sort of privileged persons, stiled formerly *kings' jesters*, were usually men of wit and parts, a sort of free speakers, who were indulged

* To respect the laws.

† Neither forward to begin, nor backward to end a fray.

‡ *To owe*, in old English, is to own or possess.

§ *To trow* is to *believe*. A ne line means not to embrace all opinions, because delivered under the sanction of philosophy or learning.

|| That is, never set equal to the stake you throw for.

¶ A phrase for improving one's capital.

in a liberty of telling truths, or making reflections on their master's conduct, without being reprehended or restrained. And as they were the only courtiers who were permitted such a licence, they deserved more properly to be deemed the *king's friends*, than to have been stigmatized by either of the other denominations.

S C E N E XV.

The curses which the justly provoked father denounces here, against his unnatural daughters, are so very horrid and shocking to humanity, that I shall not offend my Reader by quoting them; though Shakespeare, I am convinced, supplied them merely in order to raise an abhorrence in his audience, against two of the greatest crimes in the black list of deadly sins, namely, ingratitude and undutifulness; and to shew, as the injured parent most emphatically expresses it, in the same passage,

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
'To have a thankless child!

A C T II. S C E N E VI.

In this same Scene, and upon account of Kent's warmth and impatience of speech and temper, though still under the disguise of an hireling attendant on Lear, there is a very good description given of such a person as he appears to be; a character frequently to be met with in life, though the speaker is mistaken in the application of it to the honest Duke, who might very properly be said, in the sense of the expression above given, to have been the *King's friend*.

Cornwall. This is some fellow,
Who having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
A sawey roughness; and constrains the garb,
Quite from his nature. He can't flatter, he!
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth;
And they will take it so—If not, he's plain—
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness

Harbour

Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
Than twenty silly ducking observants,
That stretch their duties nicely.

S C E N E X.

When Gloster makes an apology to Lear, here, for not pressing his son, the duke of Cornwall, a second time, to an interview with him, on account of the *fiery quality* of the Duke, as also having brought an answer from him that he was not well, the injured Monarch resents it thus :

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall—The dear father
Would with his daughter speak—commands her service—
Are they informed of this ? My breath and blood !
Fiery ? The fiery duke ? Tell the hot duke, that—
[Gloster offers to go.]

No, but not yet—May be, he is not well—
Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
Whereto our health is bound ; we're not ourselves,
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body—I'll forbear ;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,
To take the indisposed and sickly fit,
For the sound man.

The surprize and resentment expressed in the first part of the above speech, is just and natural ; but the pause of recollection which afterwards abates his anger, is extremely fine, both in the reasonableness of the reflection, and the humanity of the sentiment.

This beautiful passage, with many others of the same tender kind, which follow in the course of developing Lear's character, and which I shall occasionally refer back from to this note, render this unhappy man a real object both of commiseration and esteem, notwithstanding the weakness, passion, and injustice he has so fully exposed in the beginning of this Play.

No writer that ever lived was capable of drawing a mixed character, equal to Shakespeare ; for no one has ever seemed to have dived so deep into

Nature, 'as himself.—Frequent instances of this admirable talent in him, may be selected from his Works. Most other authors, in their descriptions of men, present us either with a *flowery mead*, or a *savage desert*; but the *demesne* of human nature, which includes both the fruitful field and the barren waste, within one inclosure, is rarely delineated by common writers.

S C E N E XII.

Lear to Goneril, upon her abridging his train.

I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad;
 I will not trouble thee—My child, farewell;
 We'll no more meet, no more see one another.
 But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
 Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
 Which I must needs call mine; thou art a bile,
 A plague-sore, or imbossed carbuncle,
 In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee;
 Let shame come when it will, I do not call it;
 I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
 Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove:
 Mend when thou canst—Be better, at thy leisure.
 I can be patient.

Here poor Lear seems to make some kind of amends for his former violence; for though the provocation continues still the same, nay rather, indeed, is increased by the repetition of it, yet he contents himself, in this place, with barely upbraiding and reviling the offender, but refrains from adding curses to his reproaches.

Human nature is equally discernible in both these instances. The suddenness of his rage, on the first injury, might have wrested those anathemas from him, involuntarily; but before the second occasion presented itself, his fury had had time to abate, and he then restrains his speech within the bounds of a justifiable resentment.

A C T III. S C E N E II.

The Fool. Here's a night, that pities neither wise men, nor fools.

He

He must be very ignorant of human life, who does not know that as *the sun shines equally on the just and the unjust*, so sickness, perils, and afflictions are alike the *casual* portion of the good and bad, the wise and foolish. But then all this happens without the least manner of imputation upon Providence—For this world is not a state of *retribution*—And, in reality, it would be a most uncomfortable reflection, if it was; for then we could have no reason to presume a fond and flattering hope upon a better.

S C E N E III.

Lear, in the midst of thunder and lightning.

Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemy now—Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipt of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand,
Thou perjure, and thou simulator of virtue,
That art incestuous. Caitiff, shake to pieces,
That under covert and convenient seeming,
Hath practised on man's life! Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and ask
These dreadful summoners grace.

Can there be a finer passage, or a more admonitory one, than this? If, upon all our dangers or calamities, we should enter thus into a strict self-examination of our consciences and conduct, it might naturally produce a most salutary effect on our future lives; as, on such a scrutiny we should, perhaps, oftener find our misfortunes to be, not our *diseases*, but our *medicines*; and from thence be brought to say, with the Psalmist, *Happy has it been for me, that I have been afflicted!*

In the same Scene, Lear, speaking to the Fool, who was appointed to shew him the way to Edgar's hovel, where he might be able to shelter himself from the storm, says,

Where is the straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious.

The

The truth of this observation is too obvious from experience, to need being insisted on; but I shall here add the remainder of the speech, as it may be referred to, and helps to justify, the second paragraph of my remark on the Tenth Scene above, in the former Act.

Lear. Come, your hovel—

Poor fool and knave, *I've one part in my heart,
That's sorry yet for thee.*

S C E N E V.

When they have arrived near the hovel, Lear changes his purpose, on account of a reason he afterwards gives, regarding the distracted state of his mind; and being pressed by Kent, who just then joins him, to take shelter from the outrage of the night, he cries,

Let me alone.

And being intreated, a second time, he repeats the same answer. But upon being further urged by the kind earnestness of his poor servant, which Kent still preserves the appearance of, he then exclaims, with emotion,

Wilt break my heart?

How truly affecting is this short expostulation, if quickly conceived? It was not the importunity of Kent, that he meant to observe upon; the expression needed not to have been so tender, to have marked such an offence: Princes are apt to resent the controlement of their wills or actions, in a severer stile. But it was the instantaneous comparison between the barbarity of his own daughters, which had reduced him to such a wretched condition, and the humanity of a common alien kindly pressing him to a shelter from it, that so suddenly struck and affected his mind, at that moment—This thought, indeed, might well be said to *break his heart*; and to have added a single word more, to explain this sentiment, would have marred the whole beauty of the passage.

Upon

Upon Kent's still continuing his entreaty, he still refuses to comply, but reasons with him thus :

Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin—So 'tis to thee—
But where the greater malady is fixt,
The lesser is scarce felt—Thou'dst shun a bear ;
But if thy flight lay toward the roaring sea,
Thou'dst meet the bear i' th' mouth. When the mind's free,
The body's delicate—The tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
Save what beats there

This is the true nature of the human mind ; the greater evil always swallowing up the lesser, as the rod of Moses did the other serpents. And in great calamities I do not know but it might, perhaps, be an advantage to have some other ills of an inferior nature to combat with, at the same time ; for, as Lear says, just after, as his reason for refusing to take shelter,

This tempest will not give me leave to ponder,
On things would hurt me more.

When he consents, at last, to enter the hut, he presses his two attendants to go in first, saying,

I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

Upon which he immediately falls into the following beautiful apostrophe :

You houseless poverty,
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bid the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your looped and windowed raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these ? *O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this—Take physic, Pomp ;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou may'st shake the superfluous to them,
And show the Heavens more just !*

Here also, I shall beg leave to refer the Reader back to the second paragraph of my remark on the Tenth Scene of the Second Act.

This

This puts me in mind of two good lines, on the same subject, which I met with in a very pretty little moral Poem, lately published*.

“ Ask what we have to give—it is not ours ;

“ *Heaven has but lent it us to make it yours.*

SCENE IX.

Edgar. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes ;
Who alone suffers, suffers most i' th' mind,
Leaving free things, and happy shows behind †.
But then the mind much suff'rance does o'erstep,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend, makes the king bow !

He utters this reflection, upon considering the comparative distresses to which Lear had been reduced ; and his observation being drawn both from nature and the immediate object then before him, has a double beauty and force in this place, and should be remembered and applied, in all such cases. Let us compare our own ills with those of others, especially of persons, who from their superior rank and fortune may be supposed to be better defended from injury than ourselves, and it may conduce to render our minds often more acquiescent in our own sufferings.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Edgar. Yet better thus, and known to be contemned,
Than still contemned, and flattered. To be worst,
The lowest, most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance ; lives not in fear—
The lamentable change is from the best ;
The worst returns to laughter.

Shakespeare gives us, here, a poetical paraphrase on the flattering old English proverb, that *when things are at the worst, they'll mend*. He has commenced the speech with a noble and liberal senti-

* By Miss More, of Bristol.

† States of life free from distress, and likely to continue so.

ment,

ment, and concludes it with a reflection drawn from the adage, in these lines :

World, world, O world !

But that thy strange mutations make us wait * thee,

Life would not yield to age.

That is, If the vicissitudes of life did not suffer us to amuse our sufferings still with hope, few would have patience enough to wait 'till old age should bring its slow relief to all our cares.

* * *

Enter Gloster blind, and led by an old Man.

Old Man. You cannot see your way.

Gloster. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes—

I stumbled when I saw. Full oft 'tis seen

Our maims † secure us ; and our mere defects

Prove our commodities.

This is a truth often verified in life ; but the most general instances are, that women and children are safer from harms, than men are—They hazard less, from being less able to achieve.

Gloster. As flies to wanton boys, are we to the Gods ;
They kill us, for their sport.

This is a most impious and unphilosophic reflection. Poor Gloster seems, by this expression, to have been rather soured, than softened, by his misfortunes ; which his attempted suicide afterwards proves still further. Such a sentiment must certainly surprize us, in Shakespeare, when uttered by a person of so good a character as Gloster—It could not so offend, in the mouth of Edmund, though better not spoken at all.

* * *

Gloster, when he has given his purse to the guide.

Heavens deal so still !

Let the superfluous * and lust-dieted man,

That braves † your ordinance, that will not see,

* *Wait*, instead of *bate*. Theobald.

† *Maims*, instead of *mean*. Johnson.

‡ *Superfluous*, for *superabundant*.

§ *Braves*, instead of *flaves*. Warburton.

Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly :
 So distribution should undo excess,
 And each man have enough.

Lear had before given us the same moral, as taken notice of in my remark on the Fifth Scene of the former Act; but I have quoted this passage, notwithstanding, as containing a sentiment which cannot be too often inculcated. Offer it as a *proposition*, and all the world will agree with you in the *precept*; but make it a *proposal*, and how few will join issue in the *practice*!

SCENE II.

Albany and Goneril.

When this good Duke is reproaching his wife, here, for the barbarous treatment she had given her father, she interrupts him with,

No more—'Tis foolish.

To which he replies, very justly,

Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile;
 Filths favour but themselves.

It is, indeed, too much the horrid nature of vice and folly, not only to rejoice in its own wickedness and weakness, but, as Albany says, to depreciate all wisdom and goodness in others. The Moor would have all faces black.

He says, further on in the same speech,

If that the Heavens do not their visible spirits
 Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
 Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
 Like monsters of the deep.

This sentiment was as emphatically expressed, before, on the close of the last Scene of the former Act, by two mean attendants who were witnesses to the cruelties exercised by Cornwall and Regan, on Gloucester's eyes; but I forbore to quote it, 'till I came to this passage.

Manent two Servants.

First Servant. I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.

Second Servant. If she live long,
And, in the end, meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

But to return again to the Scene with Albany and Goneril.

She replies to his humane remonstrances and just reproaches, in these words :

Milk-livered man !
That bear't a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs ;
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering ; that not know'st,
Fools do those villains pity, who are punished
Ere they have done their mischief.

On which Albany exclaims,

See thyself, devil !
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend,
So horrid as in woman *.

What she means by the last lines, is, that it is necessary to guard against foreseen evils, as well as to defend against those that press us ; but fools being too short-sighted to see the prevention in the punishment, are apt to bewail the sufferer.

S C E N E III.

Kent and a Gentleman.

The honest old *king's friend* having sent off this person with dispatches to Cordelia, then Queen of France, importing the miserable situation of her father, questions him here, on his return, what kind of effect the perusal of his letter had upon her ; and nothing, surely, can be more beautiful, nor more interesting, than the description he gives of that fine struggle between patience and sorrow, which she manifested upon this occasion ; with the delicacy and

* Diabolical qualities appear not so horrid, in the Devil, to whom they properly belong, as in woman, to whom they are unnatural. Warburton.

decency

decency of her quick retiring from view, when she found her grief beginning to master her philosophic seemings.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gentleman. Ay, Sir, she took them, read them in my presence,
And now and then an ample tear trilled down
Her delicate cheek; it seemed she was a queen
Over her passion, which, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it moved her—

Gentleman. Not to a rage. Patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest; you have seen
Sun shine and rain, at once—Her smiles and tears
Were like a wetter May. Those happy smiles
That played on her ripe lip, seemed not to know
What guests were in her eyes, which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropt—In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved,
If all could so become it*.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gentleman. Yes, once or twice, she heaved the name of Father
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart.
Cried sisters! sisters! shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What? i' th' storm? i' th' night?
Let pity ne'er believe it!—There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And, clamour-motioned†, then away she started,
To deal with grief alone.

Theobald hints that Shakespeare had borrowed this fine picture of Cordelia's grief, from Joseph, in *Holy Writ*, who being no longer able to restrain his affections, ordered his retinue from his presence, and then wept aloud.

SCENE VII.

The adulation and hyperbolical flattery which princes are too generally *abused* by, is well exposed here:

Lear. They flattered me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs in my beard, ere the black ones were there—To say ay, and

* Part of the above description resembles what Viola says, in *Twelfth-Night*:
She sat, like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.

† Motioned, instead of *moistened*. Warburton.

no, to every thing that I said—Ay and no too, was no good divinity—When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found them, there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men of their words—They told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.

The great Canute took a method of reproving the sycophants of his court, who affected to treat him as a God, by standing on the beach till the sea surrounded him, notwithstanding his stern behest to the tide to arrest its course.

S C E N E VIII.

A person, here, who has been witness to one of the Scenes of Lear's madness, makes this very natural reflection :

*A fight most pitiful, in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king.*

Strict philosophy, perhaps, may not admit of such a distinction in men, merely from the difference of outward circumstances alone; but the habits and opinions of the world will always operate both on our sentiments and feelings, on a comparison, to the full extent of the maxim here laid down.

Besides, indeed, without having the least manner of respect to persons, that superior degree of calamity which can be capable of piercing through the stronger shields of station, opulence and power, before it can inflict its arrows upon princes, must, doubtless, render them still greater objects of commiseration, than those whose condition in life may be supposed to lie more open to the ordinary assails of misfortune. See my remark upon the last Scene of the former Act.

Gloster seems to have the same sense of things, when in the following Scene he expresses a surprize, that because Lear is disordered in his senses, he should still be able to retain his own : though, indeed, he makes but a sad deduction from the reflection.

The king is mad ; how stiff is my vile sense,
 That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
 Of my huge sorrows. Better I were distract ;
 So should my thoughts be severed from my griefs,
 And woes, by wrong imagination, lose
 The knowledge of themselves.

S C E N E IX.

When Edgar, by killing of Goneril's steward,
 gets possession of the dispatches he was carrying to
 the enemy, he takes a resolution to open them ;
 which he prefaces thus :

By your leave, gentle wax and manners—Blame us not—
 To know our enemies minds we rip their hearts—
 Their papers are more lawful.

But, however certain *reasons of State* may possibly
 render such an action necessary, there is something
 in it, notwithstanding, at which the liberal and in-
 genuous mind naturally revolts. "Beyond the
 "fixed and settled rules, &c." The comparison
 he makes, indeed, is certainly strong, in favour of
 the lesser evil, regarding merely the simple position
 of the question ; but then he should have restrained
 himself to the saying the latter was more *reasonable*
 or *humane*, than have pronounced it to be more *law-*
ful. For it is this very circumstance, the *legality* of
 the former Act, which marks the difference between
 them ; and which, though severe, yet being founded
 on the maxims of the *Civil-Law*, that "no person
 "shall be convict of a crime, without his own con-
 "fession *," appears to be more justifiable, in the
 constitution of things, than even a milder act, which
 has no such principle to support it ; nay, which
 rather militates, as in this case it apparently does,
 against that very maxim ; by obtaining a surrepti-
 tious proof of guilt, *without confession* ; besides the
 compassing it, by an ungenerous baseness.

* Shaftesbury makes *ridicule*, and the Civil Law, as wisely, makes *torture*, the
 test of Truth.

S C E N E X.

The following speech is replated with filial tenderness, as well as excess (if that can possibly be) of humanity.

Cordelia, speaking to her father, while he sleeps.

Had you not been their father*, these white flakes
Did challenge pity of them. Was this a face
To be exposed against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?
In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick cross lightning? To watch, poor *Perdu*,
With this thin helm? *My very enemy's* dagger,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire. And wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine and rogues forlorn
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits, at once,
Had not concluded.

A C T V. S C E N E I.

There is a noble and a just maxim delivered in the following speech, though not, indeed, very consonant with the profligate notions of ancient barbarism, commonly called heroism.

Albany to Edmund.

Sir, this I hear, the king is come to his daughter †,
With other whom the rigour of our state
Forced to cry out. *Where I could not be honest,*
I never yet was valiant.

S C E N E V.

When Lear and Cordelia are brought in prisoners, the latter asks if they may not be permitted to a conference with *these daughters and these sisters*, in hopes of working on their compassion to let them free—To which Lear answers, with that mixture of extravagance and sound sense which so obviously run through the whole of his delirium,

No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison;
We two alone will sing, like birds i' th' cage.

* That is, had you been even an alien, or a stranger.

† To Cordelia.

When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
 And ask of thee forgiveness ; so we'll live,
 And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
 At gilded butterflies ; and hear poor rogues
 Talk of court news, and we'll talk with them, too,
 Who loses and who wins ; who's in, who's out ;
 And take upon's the mystery of things,
 As if we were God's spies. And we'll wear out,
 In a walled prison, packs and sets * of great ones,
 That ebb and flow by th' moon.

In the above speech, besides the wildness of the first part, which is, however, extremely affecting, for passion moves us more than reason, there is, here, as in all this poor king's rhapsodies, as hinted before, *a document in madness*, which excellently describes the character of the old *Quid Nunc's*, so well ridiculed in the Spectator ; indeed of the Coffee-house Politicians of all times ; and which well rebukes the idle presumption of those vain ignorants, who pretend to canvass the mysteries of state, and investigate the arcana of government, as if they were of a superior order of intelligence, without any knowledge in the science of civil polity, or the least capacity for the arts of empire.

Such intermeddlers, by working themselves in to be the demagogues of the populace, have often perplexed councils, and sometimes overthrown kingdoms. For as it is the *Few* who govern, in all states, their strength must necessarily be founded more in *authority*, than *force* ; and when once rule or royalty have been rendered the objects of general diffidence or contempt, what curb is there left to restrain the *Many* ?

“ Slaves and fools, then,
 “ Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
 “ And minister in their steads.” TIMON.

S C E N E VI.

A respect for regality, supported by a just claim, is ever so strongly impressed in the general bosom

* *Sets*, instead of *sets*. Johnson.

of a people, that rebels never think they can sufficiently secure themselves against it. From whence the common saying, that *princes seldom remove from a prison, but to a grave*. This thought is well expressed in the following speech :

Edmund to Albany, *who commands him to deliver up his prisoners.*

Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention, and appointed guard ;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosoms on his side,
And turn our impress lances in our eyes,
Which do command them.

S C E N E VIII.

After Edgar has wounded and vanquished Edmund, he makes the following reflection :

The gods are just, and of our *several* * vices
Make instruments to scourge us.

There have been such frequent instances in life, of the above observation, that those vices which we have most indulged ourselves in, have become the peculiar means of our chastisement, that it might naturally lead us into a belief, that this may, possibly, be one, among the many secret ways of Providence, with its creatures.

At least the *adaptions* have often been so very extraordinary and remarkable, that it might tempt one to suppose there must have been something more than the common casualty or contingency of events, in such cases. I could wish, however, for the sake of morals, to encourage the persuasion, and render it universal.

* * *

Albany, Edgar and Edmund,

Edgar, *giving an account of his last interview with his father.*

Never, O fault, revealed myself to him,
Until some half hour past ; when I was armed,

* I have ventured to make a slight alteration here ; because the word *pleasant*, in the Text, had no relation to the speech, as far as I have quoted it ; besides that the expression I have substituted, renders the maxim more general.

Not sure, though hoping of this good success,
 I asked his blessing, and from first to last,
 Told him my pilgrimage. But his flawed heart,
 Alack, too weak the conflict to support,
 'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
 Burst smilingly.

Edmund. Speak you on,
 You look as you had something more to say.

Albany. If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;
 For I am almost ready to dissolve,
 Hearing of this.

Edgar. 'This would have seemed a period. But such
 As love to amplify another's sorrow,
 To much would add much more,
 And top extremity *!

The difference of natures, between Albany, a man of virtue, and consequently of a compassionate disposition. and Edmund, a vicious person, and, of course, of blunted feelings, is well marked in the above dialogue. The latter would have the sad story continued, but the former intreated to hear no more of it. And Edgar has well observed upon these opposed characters, in the preface he makes to the second part of his tale,

This would have seemed a period, &c.

S C E N E IX.

The same Albany, however, immediately after, upon seeing the dead bodies of Goneril and Regan brought in, says,

'This judgment of the Heavens that makes us tremble,
 Touches us not with pity.

Here a hasty Reader might be apt to think, that the good Duke had forfeited his character for humanity, a little, in this instance; but there is something inimitably just and fine in the passage. We certainly feel ourselves differently affected towards the wretched in the common lot of life, and

* The Text has been altered here by Doctor Warburton, much to the advantage of its sense and perspicuity.

those who seem to be distinguished as the more immediate objects of divine chastisement. Our minds, in the latter case, become impressed with a sort of pious awe, which restrains our compassion, lest the too free indulgence of it might seem to arraign the justice of Providence.

This is a trait of human nature, so very little obvious to common capacities, that though all must have been sensible of the feeling, so few have had penetration enough to investigate the cause. that I dare say many have been ashamed to confess it, as imputing it to a deficiency of tenderness in their own hearts.

S C E N E X.

This Play concludes with the following most excellent moral :

Albany. All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings.

It were a consummation devoutly to be wished, that the examples of this precept were more numerous in the world, than they are—'Tis a peculiar reproach to the character which utters it, when they are not.
Albany was a king. See my last reflection upon Henry V.

T I M O N.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

TIMON.
ALCIBIADES.
APEMANTUS.
VENTIDIUS.
LUCULLUS.
LUCIUS.
SEMPRONIUS.
SENATORS.
POET.
PAINTER.
FLAVIUS.
OLD ATHENIAN.
STRANGERS.
SERVANTS.

W O M E N.

NONE.

T I M O N.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Poet. **W**HEN we for recompence have praised the vile,
 It stains the glory in that happy verse,
 Which amply sings the good.

This remark is extremely just; that the flattery which parasites or needy clients are apt indiscriminately to squander upon their patrons, lessens the value of praise to the deserving few. We will admit a lover to compliment his mistress beyond her merits, because he may be supposed, from the blindness of his passion, not to intend any exaggeration; as has been already taken notice of, on a passage in the preceding Play *. But, in every other such case, we sin with our eyes open; and thereby offend against that great and universal moral, which ought to be the principal rule both of our words, our thoughts, and our actions — namely *Truth*.

In the continuance of the same Scene, in a dialogue between the Poet and a Painter, the former sketches out the plan of a moral or didactic Poem he was then composing, for the warning and instruction of his great patron, the Lord Timon; in which there is much merit, both in the design and contrivance of the piece, as well as in the description of it.

Poet. I have, in this rough work, shaped out a man,
 Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug
 With amplest entertainment. My free drift
 Halts not particularly †, but moves itself

* See Lear, Act I. Scene II. The last remark on Cordelia's answer.

† *Halts not particularly*, designs no particular character. Johnson.

In a wide sea of wax * ; no levelled malice †
 Infects one comma in the course I hold,
 But darts ‡ an eagle-flight, bold and forth on,
 Leaving no track § behind.
 You see how all conditions, how all minds,
 As well of glib and slippery natures ¶, as
 Of grave and austere quality, tender down
 Their service to lord Timon ; his large fortune,
 Upon his good and gracious nature hanging,
 Subdues and properties to his love and tendance
 All sorts of hearts ; yea, from the glass-faced flatterer **
 To Apemantus, that few things loves better,
 Than to abhor himself ; even he drops down
 The knee before him, and returns in peace,
 More rich in 'Timon's nod.
 I have, then, on a high and pleasant hill,
 Feigned Fortune to be throned. The base o' th' mount
 Is ranked †† with all deserts, all kind of natures,
 That labour on the bosom of this sphere,
 To propagate their states ‡‡—Amongst them all,
 Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady fixed,
 One do I personate of Timon's frame,
 Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her,
 Whose present grace to present slaves and servants
 Translates his rivals.
 All those which were his fellows but of late,
 Some better than his value, on the moment,
 Follow his strides ; his lobbies fill with 'tendance ;
 Rain sacrificial whisperings ¶¶ in his ear ;
 Make sacred even his stirrup ; and through him
 Drink the free air ***.
 When Fortune, in her shift and change of mood,
 Spurns down her late beloved ; all his dependants,
 Which laboured after to the mountain's top,

* This alludes to the antient manner of writing, with an iron stile on waxen tablets. Hanmer.

† The sense of this expression has been already explained, in Note † Page 379.

‡ I have changed the word *flies*, to *darts*, to avoid the tautology between the verb and the noun *flight* ; besides that I think the expression is more emphatic of the image.

§ *Track*, Shakespeare takes the liberty of using this word for *track*.

¶ *Natures*, instead of *creatures*. Hanmer.

** *Glass-faced flatterer* ; who receive their impressions from their patron.

†† *Ranked*, for *ranged*, or more properly, *arranged*.

‡‡ To mend their conditions, or improve their fortunes.

¶¶ *Sacrificial whisperings*, offer up their prayers, and vow gifts to his altar, as if he was a God. Shakespeare says, in Anthony and Cleopatra, of the Queen's women, *They made their bends adorings*.

*** Seem only to live upon his breath.

Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,
Not one accompanying his declining foot.

Painter. 'Tis common.

A thousand moral paintings I can shew,
That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune,
More pregnant than words—Yet you do well
To shew lord Timon that mean eyes have seen
The foot above the head.

The first speech, in the above dialogue, well describes the general and truly moral satire, and properly distinguishes it from the bastard, or invidious kind of personal invective, stiled the libel or lampoon :

My free drift
Halts not *particularly*, &c.”

S C E N E II.

Timon, upon hearing of his friend Ventidius being thrown into a gaol, says to the messenger,

Commend me to him, I will send his ransom ;
And being enfranchised bid him come to me.
*'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,
But to support him after.*

The last lines contain a noble sentiment of friendship, charity, and generosity—it has merit enough in itself, to stand alone ; but would have double the effect on an hearer, if pronounced by a person of a more prudent and provident character.

This thought is beautifully expressed, in an old Elegy written on the good bishop Boulter, who died Primate of Ireland, some years ago :

———“ He thought it mean,
“ Only to help the poor to beg again.”

Timon says, soon after, in the same dialogue,

This gentleman of mine hath served me long,
To build his fortune I will strain a little,
For 'tis a bond in men.

And again, in Scene V. (for I chuse to collect like sentiments under the same head) he says to
Ventidius,

Ventidius, who comes to thank him for his friendship, and to repay the debt,

You mistake my love ;
I gave it freely, ever ; *and there's none*
Can truly say he gives, if he receives.

But to return to our former Scene—When Timon asks the old Athenian whether his daughter likes the young man that courts her, he replies,

She is young and apt—
Our own precedent passions do instruct us,
What levity's in youth.

This is a sensible and philosophic reflection, and should be more attended to, than it generally is : for there are no persons fit to educate, to guide, or instruct young people, but those who have not forgotten their own youth. Parents and grand-parents are apt, too often, to require their children and grand-children should benefit of their earned knowledge and long experience, and so go on from thence, improving still in sense and virtue. It would be a happy thing, indeed, if we could put morals on the foot of science, which is thus progressive ; but they must be very ignorant of human nature, who expect it.

“ Old folks,” as an ingenious modern author expresses it, “ would have young ones as *wise* as “ themselves ; without considering that they must “ be *fools*, if they were so *.” Meaning, for he does not stay to explain himself, that they must be persons of dull, phlegmatic natures, without passions, without sensibility, and consequently incapable of improvement or virtue.

Whenever I have happened to observe what are called *the virtues of age* to be innate in youth, I have naturally expected to meet with the vices of it there also ; and have but rarely found any one of such character uninfected with selfishness or avarice.

* The Friends, or Original Letters, Vol. II. Letter LXXIX.

When Timon receives a portrait from the Painter, he makes a satirical reflection upon it, which, tho' too just in itself, seems to be a good deal out of character in him, at that time; as being previous to the experience which soon after might have instructed him to have made it.

The painting is almost the natural man;
For since dishonour trafficks with man's nature,
He is but outside; penciled figures are
Even such as they give out.

S C E N E III.

Apemantus, on seeing and hearing much embracing and professing between Timon and Alcibiades, mutters thus to himself:

That there should be small love amongst these sweet knaves, and all this courtesy! The strain of man is bred out into baboon and monkey.

Sterne said of French politeness, that *it might be compared to a smooth coin; it had lost all mark of character*. To which I think we may add, that courtesy, like counters, by having attained a currency in the world, have come at length to bear an equal rate, we might say, a superior one, with pieces of intrinsic value; so that one who should make a difference between them in the *modern* traffic of life, would be looked upon as a mere *virtuoso*, who preferred an *Otho* to a *Georgius*.

We must take up with the world, at present, as we do with the stage, to which it has so often been compared. There is a *fable* in both; and if the actors but perform their *personated characters* well, we are not to quarrel with them for not exhibiting their *natural ones*.

S C E N E V.

The noble Timon, being rendered uneasy at the too servile deferences paid him by his clients, justly says,

Nay, ceremony was but devised, at first,
To set a gloss on faint deeds, hollow welcomes;

Recanting

Recanting goodness, sorry ere 'tis shewn ;
But where there is true friendship, there needs none.

There is a parallel thought in the Merchant of Venice, taken notice of before, in my last remark on that Play.

Further on in this Scene, there occurs a passage which well deserves to be quoted, but needs no note.

Timon, Lucius, and others.

Lucius. Might we but have the happiness, my lord, that you would once use our hearts, whereby we might express some part of our zeals, we should think ourselves for ever perfect *.

Timon. O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I should have much help from you; how had you been my friends else? Why have you that charitable title from thousands, did I not chiefly belong to your hearts †? I have told more of you to myself, than you can with modesty speak in your own behalf. And thus far I confirm you. Oh, ye gods, think I, what need we have any friends, if we should never have need of them? They would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases, that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I have oft wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits. And what better or properer can we call our own, than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes! O joy, e'en made away ere 't can be born. Mine eyes cannot hold water.

SCENE VII.

Apemantus. Oh, that men's ears should be
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!

It is, indeed, an unhappy reflection, to think how few examples there are in life, to controvert this maxim. If the first were not the case, there would be no such thing as the latter; for men would then *deserve the praise* they get.

A C T II. SCENE I.

The following speech may serve to hint a common truth, that all gifts or presents from inferiors,

* That is, arrived at the perfection of happiness.

† The sense of this passage, in the original text, is made clearer by an alteration of Doctor Johnson's.

may be considered but as petitions to their superiors.

Senator. If I want gold, steal but a beggar's dog,
And give it Timon; why, the dog coins gold.
If I would sell my horse, and buy ten more
Better than he, why, give my horse to Timon;
Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me straight
Ten able horse.

S C E N E IV.

The honest and anxious steward of Timon makes a reflection here, which the experience of all times hath too fully vouched.

Flavius. Heavens! have I said, the bounty of this lord!
How many prodigal bits have slaves and peasants
This night englutted! Who, now, is not Timon's?
What heart, head, sword, force, means, but is lord Timon's?
Great Timon's, noble, worthy, royal Timon's?
Ah! when the means are gone that buy this praise,
The breath is gone whereof this praise is made;
Feast-won, feast-lost; one cloud of winter showers,
These flies are couched*.

S C E N E V.

When the reduced and unhappy Timon finds himself involved in poverty and distress, he directs his steward to call upon the Body of the Senators, who had shared his bounties, for its assistance in this exigence; in answer to which the steward acquaints him, that he had taken the liberty to do this, already, upon his own prior knowledge in the situation of his affairs. The account he then proceeds to give of the reception his application had met with among these *shadows* of friendship, is such, I am sorry to say, as those who have ever been under a necessity of making the same experiment, will readily acknowledge to be genuine. Faint expressions of good will, with a strong reproof for extravagances, which they themselves had both encouraged and partaken of, and finally closed with an absolute denial of relief.

* Couched, smothered.

Flavius. They answer in a joint and corporate voice,
 That now they are at fall, want treasure, cannot
 Do what they would ; are sorry—You are honourable—
 But yet they could have wished—They know not—
 Something hath been amiss—A noble nature
 May catch a wrench—Would all were well—'Tis pity —
 And so intending * other serious matters,
 After distasteful looks, and these hard fractions †,
 With certain half-caps, and cold-moving nods,
 They froze me into silence.

To which Timon replies, with a competent knowledge of human nature ; for he seems to be inspired here, as before || :

These old fellows
 Have their ingratitude in them hereditary § ;
 Their blood is caked, is cold, it seldom flows ;
 'Tis lack of friendly warmth they are not kind ;
 And nature, as it grows again tow'rd earth,
 Is fashioned for the journey, dull and heavy.

After having thrown out this stricture against Age and Avarice, he desires his steward to apply to Ventidius, a young man lately come into the possession of a large fortune, whom he had just redeemed from the miseries of a gaol, and restrains him only to borrow from him the exact sum he had before paid for his release, saying,

Ne'er speak or think,
 That Timon's fortunes 'mong his friends can sink.

To which the more experienced steward replies to himself,

Would I could not ! That thought is bounty's foe ;
 Being free itself, it thinks all others so.

The same sentiment is well expressed by Zanga, in the description he gives of his conqueror :

" Is not Alonzo rather brave than cautious,
 " Honest than subtle ; *above fraud himself,*
 " *Slow, therefore, to suspect it in another ?*"

THE REVENGE.

* Intending for attending to.

† *Fractions of speech*, as you are honourable—they could have wished—'tis pity, &c.

|| See the last passage of Scene II. of the former A&T, with the remark upon it.

§ By *hereditary* he means naturally, or connate with old age.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

When Ventidius has declined to lend his assistance, (though this circumstance is only hinted at, but not produced upon the scene) Timon dispatches the steward * to Lucullus, another young man of promising hopes; who answers in the same strain with the evasive and sarcastical reply given before by the Senators, as related in the Fifth Scene of the preceding Act; pleading incapacity, and reprehending the too profuse liberality of Timon. After which he forces some pieces into Flavius's hand, by way of bribing him to pretend to his master, that he had not met with him; and then goes off. Upon which the honest and indignant steward, flinging away the money, cries out,

May these add to the number that may scald thee!
 Let molten coin be thy damnation,
 Thou disease of a friend, and not himself!
 Has friendship such a faint and milky heart,
 It turns || in less than two nights? O, ye gods!
 I feel my master's passion. 'This slave
 Unto this hour has my lord's meat in him:
 Why should it thrive, and turn to nutriment,
 When he is turned himself to poison?
 O! may diseases only work upon it,
 And when he's sick to death, let not that part
 Of nurture my lord paid for, be of power
 To expel sickness, but prolong his hour!

The generous and feeling mind must naturally sympathize with the warmth of resentment, here expressed, though its moral and charity may refrain it from concurring in the anathemas of it.

I cannot quit this scene, till I have remarked upon the character of Ventidius, as represented by two seeming contradictory circumstances, in the first and second Acts.

* In the text, this person's name is *Flaminius*, but I have not here distinguished him from *Flavius*, to avoid a confusion of persons under the same character of steward.

|| *Turns*—alluding to milk's growing sour.

In the former he shews his honesty and gratitude to his benefactor, by offering to repay the money which had been given to redeem his liberty*; and here he betrays the very reverse of these principles. Is Shakespeare inconsistent? No. 'Tis nature still. Ventidius had just then succeeded to an ample patrimony. A sudden afflux of fortune, especially to a person newly emerging from distress, is apt to swell and enlarge the heart at first; but then in mean minds it is as apt to shrink and contract it as suddenly again.

S C E N E II.

Enter Lucius, and three Strangers.

That disingenuous nature in mankind, which prompts to censure those vices in others, which themselves are capable of, is well exposed here.

When the first stranger has mentioned the forlorn state of Timon's fortunes, and related the story of Lucullus's unkindness towards him, Lucius exclaims with surprize,

What a strange case was that! Now, before the gods, I am ashamed on't. Denied that honourable man! There was very little honour shewn in that. For my own part, I must needs confess I have received some small kindnesses from him, as money, plate, jewels, and such like trifles, nothing comparing to his; yet had he not mistook him, and sent to me †, I should ne'er have denied his occasions so many talents.

But immediately after, in the same scene, upon application made to himself by Servilius, to the same purpose, he thus defends his purse:

What a wicked ‡ beast was I, (*speaking to the messenger*) to furnish myself against so good a time, when I might have shewn myself honourable? How unluckily it happened, that I should purchase the day before for a little dirt §, and undo a great deal of honour! Servilius, now, before the gods, I am not able to do—The

* Scene V. of the Play; but only hinted at here, in one of the excursions from Scene II. by way of introducing Timon's fine reply to the offer.

† The sense is corrected here by Doctor Johnson's alteration of the text in a note.

‡ *Wicked* for *unlucky*.

§ *Dirt*, instead of *part*. Theobald.

more beast, I say—I was sending to use lord Timon myself, these gentlemen can witness; but I would not, for the wealth of Athens, I had done it now. Commend me bountifully to his good lordship, and I hope his honour will conceive the fairest of me, because I have no power to be kind. And tell him this from me, I count it one of my greatest afflictions, that I cannot pleasure such an honourable gentleman. Good Servilius, will you befriend me so far as to use my own words to him?

Then turning to the first stranger, he says, what is too generally experienced through life,

True, as you said, Timon is shrunk, indeed;
And he that's once denied will hardly speed.

Upon Lucius and Servilius's going out, the following dialogue is held between the remaining persons; in which some *scandalum magnetums* are thrown out against the dignity of human nature.

First Stranger. Do you observe this, Hostilius?

Second Stranger. Ay, too well.

First Stranger. Why this is the world's soul;
And just of the same piece is ev'ry flatterer's spirit.
Who can call him his friend,
That dips in the same dish? for, in my knowing,
Timon has been this lord's father,
And kept his credit with his purse,
Supported his estate; nay, Timon's money
Has paid his men their wages. He ne'er drinks
But Timon's silver treads upon his lip—
And yet, oh, see the monstrousness of man,
When he looks out in an ungrateful shape!
He does deny him, in respect of his *,
What charitable men afford to beggars.

Third Stranger. Religion groans at it.

First Stranger. For mine own part,
I never tasted Timon in my life,
Nor any of his bounties came o'er me,
To mark me for his friend; yet, I protest,
For his right noble mind, illustrious virtue,
And honourable carriage,
Had his necessity made use of me,
I would have put my wealth into partition †,

* In respect of his, of Lucius's fortune.

† Partition, substituted for donation. Hammer.

And the best half should have attorned † to him,
 So much I love his heart—But I perceive
 Men now must learn with pity to dispense,
 For policy § fits above conscience.

This latter speech favours too much of the former one of Lucius; and, as the Queen says in *Hamlet*, *the gentleman doth profess too much*; but we shall charitably accept it as sincere, since the speaker's virtue has not been put to the proof.

S C E N E III.

Sempronius, another of Timon's *friends*, is here assailed, who evades the request by pleading surprize that he should be the first person applied to on such an exigence, before Lucius, Lucullus, and Ventidius, who had each of them so much higher obligations to his services than himself. But being beaten out of that argument, by being informed of their all having been before *touched, and found base metal*, as the messenger tells him, he then makes use of a device, not uncommon in such cases, to pretend a quarrel, or affect a jealousy with a person, in order to have one's resentment pass as an excuse for refusing the favour required.

Sempronius. How! denied him?

Ventidius, Lucullus, Lucius, all denied him?

And does he send to me? Three! Hum—

It shews but little love or judgment in him.

Must I be his last refuge? His friends, like physicians,

Thrice † give him over—Must I take th' cure upon me?

H' has much disgraced me in't—I'm angry at him—

He might have known my place. I see no sense for't,

But his occasions might have wooed me first;

For, in my conscience, I was the first man

That e'er received gift from him;

And does he think so backwardly of me,

That I'll requite it last? No—

So it may prove an argument of laughter

To th' rest, and I 'mongst lords be thought a fool,

I'd rather than the worth of thrice the sum

† *Attorned* instead of *returned*. Warburton.

§ *Policy*, for *selfishness*.

† *Twice*, instead of *thrive*. Johnson.

He had sent to me first, but for my mind's sake ;
 I'd such a courage || then to do him good—
 But now, return—
 And with their faint reply this answer join ;
 Who 'bates mine honour, shall not know my coin.

When Sempronius retires, the servant who had brought the message to him makes some reflections, which, with many other instances of the same kind, in these writings, shew that Shakespeare was as prodigal of his wit and sentiment, as Timon was of his favour and fortune, for he often squanders them both upon clowns and lacqueys.

Servant. Excellent! your lordship's a goodly villain. The Devil knew what he did when he made man politic *. He crossed † himself by't; and I cannot think but that, in the end, the villanies of man will set him clear ‡. How fairly this lord strives to appear foul! takes virtuous copies to be wicked §. Like those that, under hot ardent zeal, would set whole realms on fire ¶.

Of such a nature is his politic ** love—
 This was my lord's best hope; now all are fled,
 Save the gods only |||.

S C E N E IV.

Another *sentimental footman* sent by one of Timon's creditors to press him for his debt, speaks the following couplet, the last line of which deserves to be made an adage of:

I know my lord hath spent of Timon's wealth,
And now ingratitude makes it worse than stealth.

S C E N E VI.

Alcibiades, pleading before the Senate, for the life of a friend who had killed his antagonist in

|| *Courage, for heart, or good will.*

* *Politic*, again for *selfish*. See note last but two.

† *Crossed*, for *blest* himself, in the Romish sense of the word.

‡ *Set him clear*—Leave him no longer chargeable with the crime of tempting them.

§ *By pretending a pique of honour, and a generous resentment, at not having been first applied to.*

¶ Alluding to religious wars.

** *Politic*, encore in the same sense.

||| I have transposed these words for the sake of the measure. In the text they stand thus, *Save only the gods.*

a fair rencounter, thus addressees himself to the court :

Health, honour, and *compassion* to the Senate !
 I am an humble suitor to your virtues ;
For pity is the virtue of the law ;
 And none but tyrants use it cruelly.

Our author is always most remarkably strong in his expression, and rich in his argument, upon the subject of this divine attribute of Mercy. Witness Portia's speech in the Merchant of Venice, Isabella's in Measure for Measure, and several other passages of the same kind throughout his writings. To make *pity the virtue of the law*, is a fine idea, and a beautiful expression.

The argument for and against the practice of Duelling, is here very philosophically urged on one side, and as artfully evaded on the other.

Senator. You undergo * too strict a paradox,
 Striving to make an ugly deed look fair ;
 Your words have took such pains, as if they laboured
 To bring man-slaughter into form, and set quarrelling
 Upon the head of valour, which, indeed,
 Is valour misbegot ; and came into the world
 When sects and factions were but newly born.
 He's truly valiant, that can wisely suffer
 The worst that man can breathe, and make his wrongs
 His outsidcs ; wear them, like his raiment, carelessly ;
 And ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart,
 To bring it into danger.
 If wrongs be evils, and inforce us kill,
 What folly 'tis to hazard life for ill ?

Alcibiades. My lord——

Senator. You cannot make gross sins look clear ;
 It is not valour to revenge, but bear.

Alcibiad. My lords, then, under favour, pardon me,
 If I speak like a captain.
 Why do fond men expose themselves to battle,
 And not endure all threatenings, sleep upon't,
 And let the foes quietly cut their throats,
 Without repugnancy ? But if there be
 Such valour in the bearing, what make we
 Abroad ? Why then, sure, women are more valiant,

* *Undergo*, for *undertake*.

That stay at home ;
 If bearing carry it, then is the ass
 More captain than the lion ; and the felon,
 Loaden with irons, wiser than the judge,
 If wisdom be in suffering *.

I shall submit this difficult punctilio of honour† to the decision of my male Readers ; for, as a woman, I cannot be supposed to be a competent judge of it. However, I shall venture to proceed so far as to observe, that as this piece of antient chivalry is said to have been originally instituted for our defence, I must confess, I think it should have rested there.

Alcibiades then concludes the above speech, by petitioning again for mercy :

Oh, my lords,
 As you are great, be pitifully good ;
 Who cannot condemn rashness, in cold blood ?
 'To kill, I grant, is sin's extremest guilt,
 But, in defence, by mercy 'tis most just.
 'To be in anger is impiety ;
 But who is man that is not angry ?
 Weigh but the crime with this.

S C E N E VII.

When Timon meets his late delinquent friends at the mock banquet he had prepared and pressed them to, he makes a just sarcasm, as well as a justly provoked one, upon the insincerity of their professions.

Senator. The swallow follows not summer more willingly than we your lordship.

Timon, aside. Nor more willingly leaves winter—Such summer-birds are men.

He again carries on the same strain, in the first part of the grace he pronounces before the covers are taken off.

Timon. The gods require our thanks—

You great benefactors, sprinkle our society with thankfulness. For your own gifts make yourselves praised ; but reserve still to give, lest your deities be despised. Lend to each man enough, that one

* The text has been much improved in this latter part, by Doctor Johnson.

† Duelling.

need not lend to another ; for were your godheads to borrow of men, men would forsake the gods.

When the dishes are exposed, filled only with warm water, he thus expresses his resentment, in just description and apt epithets, for such guests.

May you a better feast never behold,
 You knot of mouth-friends ; smoke, and luke-warm water
 Is your perfection †. This is Timon's last ;
 Who stuck and spangled you with flatteries *,
 Washes it off, and sprinkles in your faces
 Your reeking villainy. Live loathed, and long,
 Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,
 Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,
 You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time-flies ‡,
 Cap and knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks ||.

A C T IV. S C E N E II.

In this Scene, another of Timon's servants, or rather *one of Shakespeare's* §, delivers himself most affectionately and affectingly, upon the unhappy condition of his master.

As we do turn our backs
 From our companion, thrown into his grave,
 So his familiars from his buried fortunes
 Slink all away ; leave their false vows with him,
 Like empty purses pick'd ; and his poor self,
 A dedicated beggar to the air,
 With his disease of all-shunned poverty,
 Walks, like contempt, alone.

S C E N E III.

There are so many unfavourable pictures of the world already given by Shakespeare, that though each of them may be very proper, in its respective place, to adorn the fable, and maintain the characters in the several Dramas ; yet some of them, it may be thought, might be spared in a work of this ge-

† That is, your perfect resemblance.

* Flatteries, for bounties, or favours.

‡ Summer insects.

|| Machines of motion, which require frequent winding up ; or a phrase framed for time-servers.

§ See my note following Sempronius's speech, in Scene III. of the foregoing Act.

neral kind, which requires not such minute attentions: but as my scope here is not only to instruct the ignorant, to warn the unwary, and inculcate the moral of our author, both from his precepts and examples, but to do him honour also as a writer, I think it would be a sort of injustice in me to suffer any passage in him to remain unnoted, which, besides conducing to such great ends, may serve to shew the fecundity of his powers and genius, which has enabled him to treat the same subject in so many different ways, with still new thoughts, and varied expression.

The following speech is a beautiful instance of this observation.

Timon. Twinned brothers of one womb,
 Whose procreation, residence, and birth
 Scarce is dividant, touch with several fortunes,
 The greater scorns the lesser. Not even nature,
 To whom all sores lay siege, can bear great fortune,
 But by contempt of nature*.
 Raise me this beggar, and denude † that lord,
 The senator shall bear contempt hereditary ‡,
 The beggar native § honour.
 It is the pasture lards the wether's sides,
 The want that makes him lean ||. Who dares, who dares,
 In purity of manhood stand upright,
 And say, This man's a flatterer? If one be,
 So are they all; for every greeze ¶ of fortune
 Is smoothed by that below. The learned pate
 Ducks to the golden fool. All is oblique;
 There's nothing level in our cursed natures,
 But direct villainy.

In the Sixth Scene following, he exclaims against the world again:

But myself,
 Who had the world as my confectionary,

* This sentence is obscure. It means, that men, tho' conscious of the imperfection of human nature, when puffed up by fortune will despise others for their common imperfections, as if they were themselves exempt from them.

† *Denude*, strip, or deprive him of his possessions.

‡ He uses the word *hereditary* here, with the same latitude he has done before. See note 4th on Scene V. of Second Act. In this place it means, that contempt is the usual portion or patrimony of poverty.

§ *Native*, is used in the same sense with *hereditary*, as above explained.

|| The text has been cleared of its difficulty, and much improved in its sense, in this passage, by Doctor Warburton.

¶ *Greeze*, step, or degree.

The

The mouths, the tongues, the eyes, the hearts of men
 At duty, more than I could frame employments ;
 That numberless upon me stuck, as leaves
 Do on the oak ; have, with one winter's brush,
 Fallen from their boughs, and left me open, bare,
 For every storm that blows.

But to return. At the end of the former speech,
 upon finding gold while he was digging for roots, he
 says,

Thus much
 Of this will make black, white ; fair, foul ; wrong, right ;
 Brave, noble ; old, young ; coward, valiant.
 You gods ! why, this—this, you gods ! why this
 Will lug your priests and votaries from your sides ;
 Pluck stout men's pillows from beneath their heads *.
 This yellow slave
 Will knit and break religions ; bless th' accursed ;
 Make the hoar leprosy adored ; place thieves,
 And give them title, knee, and approbation,
 With senators on the bench ; this is it
 That makes the mourning † widow wed again. . . .
 Come, damned earth,
 Thou common whore of mankind, that putt'st odds
 Among the rout of nations, I will make thee
 Do thy right nature ‡. [*Burying it.*]

And again, in the Sixth Scene of this Act, looking
 on the gold, he renews the same reflections.

O thou sweet king-killer, and dear divorce
 'Twixt natural son § and fire ! thou bright defiler
 Of Hymen's purest bed ! thou valiant Mars !
 Thou ever young, fresh, loved, and delicate wooer,
 Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow,
 That lies on Dian's lap || ! thou visible god,
 That solderest close impossibilities,
 And mak'st them kifs ! that speak'st with ev'ry tongue,
 To ev'ry purpose ! O thou touch of hearts !
 Think thy slave man rebels ; and by thy virtue
 Set them into confounding odds, that beasts
 May have the world in empire.

* Kill them before their time, for the sake of their wealth.

† The word in the text is *wappened*, but the Commentators not agreeing about the sense of the expression, I have ventured to substitute one that needs no explanation.

‡ Lie hid in the bowels of the earth, where kind Providence meant to conceal thee.

§ This adjective is meant in the liberal sense of the word, not the legal one.

|| What a beautiful and poetical passage is here, both in the imagery and the expression !

I have

I have suffered these last lines to pass, as they seem as well to continue the enumeration of the fatal effects of avarice, as to denounce a curse against it.

S C E N E IV.

When Alcibiades meets with Timon wild in the woods, he asks with concern and surprize,

How came the noble Timon to this change?

To which he severely replies, but in Shakespeare's usual sport of fancy, even on the most serious subjects,

As the moon does, by wanting light to give ;
But then renew I could not, like the moon ;
There were no suns to borrow of.

Alcibiades. I've heard in some sort of thy miseries.

Timon. Thou saw'st them when I had prosperity.

And in the next Scene, in an invocation to the earth, he says,

Dry up thy marrows, vines, and plough-torn leas,
Whereof ingrateful man, with lickerish draughts,
And morsels unctuous, greases his pure mind,
That from it all consideration slips.

S C E N E VI.

Here also are some more strictures thrown out *contra mundum*, with which I shall conclude this Act.

Timon and Apemantus.

Apemantus. What man didst thou ever know unthrift, that was beloved after his means?

Timon. Who, without those means thou talk'st of, didst thou ever know beloved?

A C T V. S C E N E I.

Flavius, the good steward, upon seeing his master sitting before the mouth of his cave, makes the following fond and pathetic exclamation, succeeded by reflections,

reflections, in the same stile with those which mostly fill this Play :

Oh, ye gods !
 Is yon despised and ruinous man my lord ?
 Full of decay and failing ?
 Oh, monument and wonder of good deeds,
 Evilly bestowed !
 What change of honour desperate want has made !
 What viler thing upon the earth than friends,
 Who can bring noblest minds to basest ends ;
 How rarely * does it meet with this time's guise,
 When man was wished to love his enemies.
 Grant I may ever love, and rather woo
 Those that *would* mischief me, than those that *do* ! †

S C E N E II.

Here also in the same strain our Author proceeds. When two of Timon's former sycophants, upon hearing that their patron is suddenly become rich again, are going together to cajole him, as before, they hold the following dialogue with each other.

Poet and Painter.

Poet. What have you now to present unto him ?

Painter. Nothing, at this time, but my visitation ; only I will promise him an excellent piece.

Poet. I must serve him so too ; tell him of an intent that's coming toward him.

Painter. Good as the best. Promising is the very air of the time ; it opens the eyes of expectation. Performance is ever the duller for his act ; and, but in the plainer and simpler kind of people, the deed is quite out of use. To promise, is most courtly and fashionable ; performance is a kind of will or testament, which argues a great sickness in his judgment that makes it.

Poet. I am thinking what I shall say I have provided for him. It must be a personating ‡ of himself ; a satire against the softness of prosperity, with a discovery of the infinite flatteries that follow youth and opulency. . . .

* *Rarely, for fitly,*

† This passage is difficult. Doctor Warburton has altered the text, to accommodate it to his explanation ; and Doctor Johnson has restored it. The meaning of it, as it here stands, is, that *open enemies* are less dangerous, than *false friends*. We can shield ourselves from the one, but are prisoners at discretion, with the other. Mr. Johnson quotes a Spanish proverb to the same effect : " Defend me " from my friends, and from my enemies I will defend myself."

‡ *Personating, a representation of his own situation and circumstances.*

Nay,

Nay, let's seek him.

Then do we sin against our own estate,
When we may profit meet, and come too late.

Painter. True.

While the day serves, before black-cornered night,
Find what thou want'st by free and offered light.

Timon over-hearing their conversation from behind his cave, casts out another invective against gold, and concludes his speech with an expression, which I have also let pass for the reason before-mentioned, in the last note on Scene III. of the former Act. For though used in the form of a curse, it may, however, be hardly considered in that light, as 'tis but the natural consequence of the vice, and is no more than to say, *May the man who swallows poison die*, which he certainly will do.

Timon. What a god's gold, that he is worshipped
In baser temples than where swine do feed !
'Tis thou that rigg'st the bark, and plough'st the foam,
Settest admired reverence in a slave.
*To thee be worship, and thy saints, for aye,
Be crown'd with plagues that thee alone obey.*

I shall here conclude my remarks upon this Play, with Dr. Johnson's character of it, as far as the fable has any relation to moral.

“ The catastrophe (says he) affords a very powerful
“ warning against that ostentatious liberality which
“ scatters bounty, but confers no benefit; and buys
“ flattery, but not friendship.”

TITUS ANDRONICUS.

D d

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

TITUS ANDRONICUS, a noble Roman General against the Goths.

MARCUS ANDRONICUS, his brother, and a Tribune of the People.

BASSIANUS, second Son of the late Emperor.

W O M E N.

TAMORA, Queen of the Goths, a Captive.

TITUS ANDRONICUS.

IT has been much disputed among the Commentators, whether this Play be originally Shakspeare's, or only the work of some elder Author, revised and improved for representation by him: though, if I might be allowed to venture a criticism upon this subject, I should suppose the intire Piece to be his, and for a very singular reason; Because the whole of the fable, as well as the conduct of it, is so very *barbarous*, in every sense of the word, that I think, however he might have been tempted to make use of the legend, in some hurry or other, for his own purpose, he could hardly have adopted it from any other person's composition. We are quick-sighted to the faults of others, though purblind to our own. Besides, he would never have strewed such sweet flowers upon a *caput mortuum*, if some child of his had not lain entombed underneath. Many of the beauties I hint at, being merely poetical imagery, without any mixture of moral in them, are therefore not inserted among the following notes, as not being the proper object of my remarks, which must, in consequence, appear to fall short of the above compliment.

The arguments, *pro* and *con*, for the authenticity of this Play, are not material to our present purpose; for as we find it among the muster-roll of our Author's forces, it challenges a right to pass in review along with the rest, though there are but very few passages in it to answer the design of this work.

I should imagine, from the many shocking spectacles exhibited in this Play, that it could never have been represented on any theatre, except the

Lisbon scaffold, where the duke d'Aveiro, the Marquis of Tavora, *cum suis*, were so barbarously massacred, for the supposed Jesuits' plot against the present king of Portugal. And yet Ben Johnson assures us that it was performed, in his time, *with great applause*; and we are also told that it was revived again, in the reign of Charles the Second, *with the same success*. The different humours and tastes of times! It would be not only hissed, but driven off the stage at present.

ACT I. SCENE II.

Tamora, queen of the Goths, and a captive, pleading here to Titus Andronicus for her son's life, who was going to be offered up as a victim of war, speaks in Shakespeare's usual style, as remarked before *, on the great article of mercy.

Would'st thou draw near the nature of the gods?
 Draw near them in being merciful—
 Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge.

* * *

There is something so soothing to the mind, in a description of the sequestered Scene, free from the tumult, the vices, and the violences of the world, that it naturally pleases us, even though the grave itself be made the subject of it.

I affirm that I was sensible of such a feeling myself, on reading the following passage, in this Scene, though without the least manner of disgust to life, all the while.

Titus Andronicus,

On the interment of his sons.

In peace and honour rest you here, my sons;
 Rome's readiest champions, repose you here,
 Secure from worldly chances and mishaps—
 Here lurks no treason, here no envy swells;

* See Timon, Act III. Scene VI. the first remark.

Here grow no damned grudges, here no storms,
No noise, but silence and eternal sleep.

S C E N E III.

When Bassianus applies to Titus for his interest
in support of his election to the Roman empire,
he says,

My faction * if thou strengthen with thy friends,
I will most thankful be—And thanks, to men
Of noble minds, is honourable meed.

There is something truly great in the above sentiment, and shews the speaker of it worthy of being an emperor. A grateful heart is all that Heaven itself requires, for its numerous blessings and mercies toward us.

A C T III. S C E N E IV.

Marcus Andronicus, endeavouring to repress his brother Titus's excess of grief, who was labouring under the most unheard of cruelties and misery, both in himself and his children, addresses him thus :

Oh ! brother, speak with possibilities,
And do not break into these deep extremes.

To which Titus replies :

Is not my sorrow deep, having no bottom ?
Then be my passions bottomless with them.
Marcus. But yet let reason govern thy lament.
Titus. If there were reason for these miseries,
Then into limits could I bind my woes.
When Heaven doth weep, doth not the earth o'er-flow ?
If the winds rage, doth not the sea wax mad,
Threat'ning the welkin with his big-swoln face ?
And wilt thou have a reason for this coil ? . . .
*Then give me leave, for losers will have leave
To ease their stomachs with their bitter tongues.*

Titus, in this speech, says a great deal to excuse the shews and expressions of grief, though in too

* This innocent word is not to be understood here, in the common acceptation of it. Shakspeare uses it simply to denote any party in a state.

poetical a stile, rather, for so sad a subject; but I think the first argument of it a very strong one, upon this occasion—

If there were reason for these miseries, &c.

For we certainly suffer those misfortunes, which happen to our lot in the common course of nature or of justice, with much more resignation of mind, than we can do those which are inflicted on us by the violences of tyranny, cruelty, or malice—Here our detestation and abhorrence of the agent, serves to heighten our resentment of the injury.

In the two last lines above, Shakespeare has given an elevation to the common expression of *losers have leave to speak*. There are instances of the same kind, in our Author, before taken notice of. This is one of his characteristics; and, indeed, I think that his stile and manner are so strongly marked, throughout this Play, (take the above speech, for one instance*) that I own it surprizes me Doctor Johnson should say, “he did not think Shakespeare’s touches discernible in it.”

In the same Scene, when some shocking objects of his wretchedness are presented to the view of Titus, he makes a very natural reflection upon them, for a person in such unhappy circumstances.

Ah, that this sight should make so deep a wound,
And yet detested life not shrink thereat!
That ever death should let life bear his name,
Where life hath no more interest than to breathe!

In the extremities of anguish, either of mind or body, we are apt to be surpris’d at that toughness in our frame, which prevents its dissolution; and are often tempted to wish our miseries might of themselves have sufficient force to bring us that relief, which our virtue or religion forbids us to supply ourselves.

* The whole of it, for I have transcribed it short.

M A C B E T H.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

MACBETH.
DUNCAN.
MACDUFF.
BANQUO.
MALCOLM.
ROSSE.
CATHNESS.
ANGUS.
DOCTOR.
OLD MAN.

W O M E N.

LADY MACBETH.
LADY MACDUFF.

M A C B E T H.

A C T I. S C E N E V.

Banquo. **B**UT 'tis strange ;
 And oftentimes to win us to our harm,
 The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
 Win us with honest trifles, to betray us
 In deepest consequence.

From this speech may be deduced the nature of temptation to evil, which, by suggesting some immediate pleasure or profit, prompts us on to unhappy consequences.

S C E N E VI.

The following description of the death of a brave man, after he has made a peace with his conscience by contrition, is a fine one.

Malcolm, speaking to the King of the execution of the Thane of Cawdor.

Very frankly he confessed his treasons,
 Implored your highness' pardon, and set forth
 A deep repentance—Nothing in his life
 Became him like the leaving it. He died
 As one that had been studied * in his death,
 To throw away the dearest thing he owed †,
 As 'twere a careless trifle.

The bravery of spirit which so many persons, both antient and modern, have manifested, in this great and last article of their lives, seems to argue something more in human nature, *than mere animal existence.*

*

*

*

The specious appearances of men, by which the ingenuous and unwary are liable to be deceived in

* Who had frequently philosophised upon it,

† Owed for owned.

their commerce with the world, are marked and lamented by Duncan in this Scene, where, speaking of the above-mentioned rebel, he says,

There is no art
To find the mind's construction * in the face—
He was a gentleman, on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Momus well wished a window in every man's breast. Physiognomists pretend they can take a peep through the features of the face; but this is too abstruse a science to answer the general purposes of life; besides that education may render such knowledge doubtful, as in the case of Socrates. The diseases or unsoundness of the body are generally visible in the countenance and complexion of the invalid; how infinitely more useful would it be, if the vices of the mind were as obvious there! It is not necessary in the first case, because the patient can tell his disorder; but, in the other instance, *the infected person is dumb.*

“ O heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest
“ Should yet remain, where faith and realty
“ Remain not.”

MILTON.

See the last remark upon Twelfth Night.

S C E N E IX.

Macbeth, in his meditations on the murder of Duncan, has some fine and just reflections on the nature of conscience.

If it were *done* when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly—If th' assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With its success, surcease †; that but this blow
Might be the be all, and the end-all—*here.*
But *here*, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come—But, in these cases,
We still have judgment *here*, that we but teach
Bloody instructions; which, being taught, return

* Natural disposition.

† *Success, surcease.* These two words were reversed, in the original, but properly transposed by Theobald.

To plague th' inventor ; this even-handed justice
Commends † the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips.

S C E N E X.

And in this Scene, when Lady Macbeth upbraids her husband with cowardice, for not being more determined on the purpose of the murder, he makes the following noble reflection :

Prithee, peace—
*I dare do all that may become a man—
Who dares do more, is none.*

Doctor Johnson very justly says, “ That these
“ lines ought to bestow immortality on the Author,
“ though all his other productions had been lost.”

A C T II. S C E N E II.

Again—The horrors of a guilty mind are strongly and finely painted, in the following speech. The images of our crimes not only haunt us in our dreams, but often become the visions of our waking thoughts. All the bars that Providence could oppose to vice, it has set against it. It could no more, without depriving man of his free-will, and so rendering him equally incapable of merit or blame.

Macbeth, *going to commit the murder.*

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand ? Come, let me clutch thee—
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling, as to sight ? Or, art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain ?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable,
As that which now I draw—
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going ;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses,
Or else worth all the rest—I see thee, still ;

† *Commends, for returns.*

And

And on the blade o' th' dudgeon gouts * of blood,
Which was not so before—There's no such thing—
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes.

The remainder of this speech is worth quoting, both on account of the fine poetical imagery it contains, and in order to shew the strong terror which guilt had impressed on his mind, by his invoking even inanimate matter not to inform against him.

Now o'er one half the world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep; now Witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings; and withered Murder,
Alarum'd by his centinel, the wolf †,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
Like Tarquin's theft ‡, gliding tow'rd his design ||,
Moves like a ghost—Thou found and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my where-about,
And take the present horror from the time ¶,
Which now suits with it.

S C E N E III.

Lady Macbeth, speaking here of Duncan's grooms, says,

That which hath made them drunk, hath made me bold;
What hath quenched them, hath given me fire.

Our sex is obliged to Shakespeare, for this passage. He seems to think that a woman could not be rendered completely wicked, without some degree of in-

* *Gouts, drops*—from *goute*, French.

† The wolf and all wild beasts go out to prowl at midnight.

‡ Alluding to a Poem of our Author's, on the story of Tarquin and Lucrece, where he describes his stealing to her chamber in the dead of night.

And in Cymbeline he makes Jachimo say,

“ Our Tarquin thus

“ Did softly press the rushes, ere he wakened

“ The chastity he wounded.”

[Act II. Scene II.

|| The Commentators have disagreed about the original line, in this place. I do not think any of them have sufficiently squared the sense to the expression. The liberty I have ventured to take with it, has at least rendered the passage intelligible.

¶ The *horror* he means, is the *dread silence* that would be interrupted by the exclamation of the stones, which his terror makes him here suppose possible.

toxication.

toxication. It required two vices in her ; one to intend, and another to perpetrate the crime. He does not give *wine and wassail* * to Macbeth ; leaving him in his natural state, to be actuated by the temptation of ambition alone.

* * *

Macbeth, after he had committed the murder, speaking of the Grooms, who lay in the ante-chamber he had just passed through, says,

One cried, *God bless us !* and *Amen !* the other ;
As they had seen me with these hang-man's hands,
List'ning their fear—I could not say *Amen*,
When they did say *God bless us*.
But wherefore could I not pronounce *Amen* ?
I had most need of blessing, yet *Amen*
Stuck in my throat.

This is natural—One of the most horrid circumstances of guilt, is that total suppression a wicked person is apt to labour under, for a time, of the ability to pray. I should think that, from this very extraordinary circumstance, Divines might deduce a good argument to strengthen the Christian system of theology. If, as the advocates for Natural Religion say, our vices proceed from the violence of our passions merely, contrition, upon their scheme, might immediately succeed the gratification of our purpose ; but, as we are taught that temptation arises from the instigation of an evil spirit, the fiend has still a further interest in the postponing of our repentance. Suicide must certainly be a strong instance of this latter doctrine ; as it prompts us, even contrary to the intent of nature, and the general scope, both of our affections, impressions, and feelings, to the destruction of our own existence.

Macbeth. Methought I heard a voice cry, *sleep no more !*
Macbeth doth murder sleep—The innocent sleep—

* *Wassail.* An antient beverage of ale, apples, and honey mixed.

Sleep

Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve * of care,
 The birth † of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
 Balm of hurt minds, great Nature's second course,
 Chief nourisher in life's feast.

In the first part of my remark on the second Scene above, I have observed upon the impressions that a disturbed mind is apt to stamp on our dreams and sight. This passage adds our sense of hearing, also, to the testimony of our conscience.

Toward the latter end of this Scene, there is another hint given to the same admonitory purpose.

Macbeth. Whence is that knocking ! [Starting.
 How is't with me, when every noise appals me ?
 What hands are here ? Hah ! they pluck out mine eyes—

I continued the quotation of the last speech above but one, to the end of it, in order to treat my Reader with the beautiful description of sleep, there given by our Author. And again, at the latter end of the Fifth Scene of the Third Act, Lady Macbeth says to her husband,

You lack *the season of all Nature, sleep*—

The expression here is not only poetical, but philosophical also ; for the vegetable world requires sleep, or rest, as well as the animal one.

S C E N E IV.

Macbeth. The labour we delight in, physics pain.

This expression is very just, in general, but more particularly so in the present case supposed, respecting the offices of friendship and good will. How pleasant, how easy is duty, when inspirited by affection !

* * *

A C T III. S C E N E II.

The awe with which a bad man, though ever so valiant, is naturally impressed by the superiority

* A loose skein of filk. Doctor Seward.

† Instead of *death*, Warburton.

which virtue gives another brave man, is well depicted here :

Macbeth. To be thus, is nothing ;
 But to be safely thus—Our fears in Banquo
 Stick deep ; and in his royalty of nature
 Reigns that which would be feared. 'Tis much he dares ;
 And to that dauntless temper of his mind,
 He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
 To act in safety. There is none but he
 Whose being I do fear ; and, under him,
 My genius is rebuked.

The text adds the allusion, here, *as Anthony's was by Cæsar*, which Doctor Johnson very judiciously rejects as spurious. I agree with him—I do not think it is in Shakespeare's stile—The passage is too warm and immediate, to admit of so cold and remote an image. Besides, this is a soliloquy, and the speaker needed not to have explained his meaning to himself, supposing the expression of *rebuked*, had a reference to that idea.

*

*

*

The general causes which render men desperate, arising from necessities or vices, are here set forth.

First Murderer. I am one,
 Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
 Have so incensed, that I am reckless * what
 I do to spite it.

Second Murderer. And I another,
 So weary of disastrous tugs with Fortune †,
 That I would set my life on any chance,
 To mend it, or be rid on't.

S C E N E III.

The wretched condition of a mind not only labouring under the sense of guilt, but dreading the immediate chastisement of it, is more strongly

* Heedless or careless.

† This line is altered for the better, by Warburton.

painted in this Scene, than any where else in Shakespeare.

Lady Macbeth sola.

Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desires are got without content.
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter Macbeth.

How now, my lord, why do you keep alone?
Of forriest fancies your companions making;
Using those thoughts, which should, indeed, have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy,
Should be without regard—What's done, is done.

Macbeth. We have scotched † the snake, not killed it—
She'll close and be herself; whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let both worlds disjoint, and all things suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams,
That shake us nightly—Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our place, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless extasy ||. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further ¶!
O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!

S C E N E V.

The true spirit of hospitality is well described, in the following expostulation from Lady Macbeth to her husband, upon his neglect of the guests.

My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer; the feast is sold,
That is not often vouched; while 'tis making
'Tis given with welcome—To feed, were best at home;
From thence, the fauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.

† To *scotch*, is to cut across, to slash or wound.

|| *Extasy*. Any strong perturbation or distraction of the mind may be so called, though the word is seldom used by any other writer, but as an expression of pleasure or joy.

¶ See my second remark on Scene II. Act I. of the former Play.

In the same Scene, Macbeth, speaking in soliloquy, upon the appearance of Banquo's ghost, expresses a common notion, which, however, cannot be too strongly inculcated in the mind of man; as whatever tends to the service of religion or virtue, ceases to be weakness or superstition, though perhaps strict philosophy may not assist to support it.

It will have blood—They say, blood will have blood—
 Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak *;
 Augurs, that understand relations, have
 By magpies, and by choughs †, and rooks, brought forth
 The secret man of blood.

S C E N E VI.

Hecate delivers a truth here, which would better have become a more moral speaker. But Shakespeare can

“ Gather honey from the weed,
 “ And make a moral of the Devil himself.” HEN. V.

After having mentioned the magic arts by which she is drawing on Macbeth to his destruction, she adds,

He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear;
 And you all know, *security*
Is mortal's chiefest enemy.

* * *

A C T IV. S C E N E II.

Macbeth, upon hearing that Macduff had escaped from his design against his life, by flying into England, makes a reflection, which though wickedly applied, in the present case, may, notwithstanding, if it is allowable to extract medicine from poison, or *gather honey from the weed*, be considered

* See last line but two of the last speech in Scene II. of the former Act.

† *Choughs*, sea-gulls.

as a good general rule of action, in all enterprises of moment.

Time, thou anticipat'st* my dread exploits.
 The flighty purpose never is o'er-took,
 Unless the deed go with it. From this moment,
 The very firtings of my heart shall be
 The firtings of my hand. And even now,
 To crown my thoughts with acts, be't thought and done;
 The castle of Macduff I will surprize,
 Seize upon *Fife*, give to the edge o' th' sword
 His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls,
 That trace him in his line—No boasting like a fool;
 This deed I'll do, before this purpose cool.

It was a saying of Charles the Fifth, "That we
 " should deliberate under *Saturn*, but execute under
 " *Mercury*."

S C E N E III.

In the following dialogue, the Reader will meet with many just, natural, and prudent reflections, too obvious to need any comment; though, perhaps, those urged by Lady Macduff are carried a little too far, in the present exigence.

Lady Macduff *and* Roffe.

Lady Macduff, *speaking of her husband's flight*.

What had he done, to make him fly the land?

Roffe. You must have patience, madam.

Lady Macduff. He had none,

His flight was madness; when our actions do not,
 Our fears do make us traitors †.

Roffe. You know not,

Whether it was his wisdom, or his fear.

Lady Macduff. Wisdom? To leave his wife, to leave his babes,

His mansion and his titles, in a place
 From whence himself does fly?—He loves us not;
 He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
 The most diminutive of birds, will fight,

* *Anticipate for prevent.*

† Our laws put the same construction upon it—Flight is taken to imply a tacit confession of guilt; and whenever this is the case, it is always made one of the articles of the indictment, that the person charged with a fact, had fled for the same.

Her young ones in her nest, against the owl *—
 All is the fear, and nothing is the love ;
 As little is the wisdom, where the flight
 So runs against all reason.

Rosse. My dearest cousin,
 I pray you school yourself ; but for your husband,
 He's noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
 The fits o' th' season. I dare not speak much further. . . .
 I take my leave of you ;
 Shall not be long but I'll be here again—
*Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward,
 To what they were before.*

But when Lady Macduff is warned herself to fly, she begins, at first, to reason upon the proposition, as she had before done on her husband's flight, by pleading the security of her innocence ; but it becoming now *her own case*, she quickly falls into a more prudent and rational manner of argument upon the subject—This is Nature.

Whither † should I fly ?
 I've done no harm. But I remember now,
 I'm in this earthly world, where to do harm
 Is often laudable ; to do good, sometime
 Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas !
 Do I put up that womanly defence,
 To say I'd done no harm ?

S C E N E IV .

The different natures of men, shewn in the same circumstances and situations, are well discriminated here.

Malcolm and Macduff.

Malcolm. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
 Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macduff. Let us rather
 Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men,
 Bestride our down-fall'n birth-dame †. Each new morn

* See a parallel passage, before quoted in these remarks—

“ Unreasonable ¶ creatures feed their young, &c.

Henry VI, Part III. Act II. Scene III.

† *Whither* for *wherefore*.

‡ Stand over and defend our country from its enemies. Doctor Johnson has supplied the hint of *birth-dame*, instead of *birth-doom*, which had no meaning.

¶ *Unreasonable* for *irrational*.

New widows howl, new orphans cry ; new sorrows
Strike Heaven on the face *, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yelled out
Like syllables of dolor.

Malcolm betrays the same timidity of spirit still further, in the continuation of this dialogue, in refusing to trust his person with Macduff; though he supports his apprehensions, however, upon very reasonable grounds of diffidence.

What I believe, I'll wail ;
What know, believe ; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will—
What you have spoke, it may be so, perchance ;
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest : you have loved him well ;
He hath not touched you yet. I'm young, but something
You may deserve of him, through me, and wisdom †
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb,
T' appease an angry God.

Macduff. I am not treacherous.

Malcolm. But Macbeth is.

A good and virtuous nature may recoil,
In an imperial charge †. I crave your pardon.
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose § ;
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell—
Though all things foul should bear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must look still so ||.

Macduff. I've lost my hopes.

Malcolm. Perchance even there, where I did find my doubts.

Why in that rawness ¶ left you wife and children,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking ? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

* Assault echo.

† *And you might think it wisdom.* Shakespeare often sets grammar at defiance, His text seldom needs improvement, though it sometimes requires explanation.

‡ The influence of kings may be too strong for virtue.

§ *Transpose*—Alter the nature of.

|| If you be honest, my suspicions touch you not. Appearances may deceive ; for virtue can wear no garb but what hypocrisy can assume.

¶ *Rawness*—Unadvisedly, and unprovidedly.

Further on, he makes an admirable enumeration of those qualities which a good prince ought to be principally possessed of.

Malcolm. The king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, persev'rance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude.

This, indeed, is to be a king! whose first subjects should be his own appetites and passions.

S C E N E VI.

Here follows a true but melancholy description of a people suffering under a state of anarchy and civil war. The reader has met with many passages of the same kind, quoted in this work before.

Macduff, Malcolm, and Ross, just arrived in England.

Malcolm to Ross.

Stands Scotland where it did?

Ross. Alas, poor country!

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave, where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rend the air,
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems
A modern extacy*; the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for whom; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying, or ere they sicken.

Macduff. Oh, relation

'Too nice, and yet too true!

Malcolm. What's the newest grief?

Ross. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker †;
Each minute teems a new one.

In the same dialogue, when Ross has given Macduff an account of the murder of his wife and children, at which he seems to stand petrified with sorrow, Malcolm justly warns him of the dangerous

* Alluding to the grimace of the Fanatics. Warburton.

† For telling an *old story*.

consequences of restraining the natural shews and expressions of grief.

Malcolm. Merciful Heaven !

What, man ! Ne'er pull your hat upon your brows—
Give sorrow words ; the grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break. . . .
Dispute it like a man.

To which Macduff as justly replies, without any disgrace to philosophy or religion :

I shall do so ;
But I must feel it as a man.
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.

But he then proceeds to a reflection, which, though natural and common for the unhappy to make, in such circumstances, offends against both the principles above-mentioned, philosophy and religion, as being at once impious and unjust :

Did Heaven look on,
And would not take their part ?

Lear, on seeing Cordelia dead, makes an expostulation of the same sort :

“ Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,
“ And thou no breath at all * ?”

But all this arises from a too presumptuous and over-weening notion of our own consequence in the creation. The pride of man prompts each to consider himself as the principal object of Providence ; and we would all of us wrest the stated order of Nature, to serve our own purposes. But the true philosophy of the matter is, as Pope very justly expresses it, in different parts of his Essay on Man,

“ The Universal Cause
“ Acts not by *partial*, but by *general* laws. . . .
“ And sees with equal eye, as Lord of all,
“ An heroic perish, or a sparrow fall ;

* In the last Scene of the Play.

“ Atoms or systems into ruin hurl’d,
 “ And now a bubble bursts, and now a world.”

*

*

*

A C T V. S C E N E I.

The effects of a guilty and disturbed mind are extremely well represented here, in the person of Lady Macbeth, by the words and actions with which she betrays her crime, while she is walking in her sleep. “ A great perturbation in Nature,” as her Doctor says, “ to receive at once the benefit of sleep, “ and do the effects of watching.”

The Doctor, upon discovering the cause of her malady, very justly declares her to be no fit patient for his art, and turns her over, accordingly, to Heaven and her confessors for a cure, saying,

Unnatural deeds
 Do breed unnatural troubles ; infected minds
 To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
 More needs she the *Divine* than the *Physician*.
 God, God forgive us all.

And again, in the Third Scene, the same subject is continued.

Macbeth. How does your patient, doctor ?

Doctor. Not so sick, my lord,
 As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
 That keep her from her rest.

Macbeth. Cure her of that—
 Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
 Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
 Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
 And with some sweet oblivious antidote
 Cleanse the full * bosom of that perilous stuff
 Which weighs upon the heart ?

* The word is *stuffed*, in the text, which I have taken the liberty of changing to *full*, to avoid the tautology which occurs at the end of the line.

Doctor. Therein the patient
Must minister unto himself.

Macbeth. Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.

S C E N E II.

The situation and description of a wicked usurper involved in a domestic war to defend himself, is finely painted here.

Cathness and Angus, speaking of Macbeth :

Cathness. Some say he's mad ; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury ; but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distempered cause
Within the belt of rule.

Angus. Now does he feel
His secret murder sticking on his hands ;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach ;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love ; *now does he feel his title*
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Cathness *. Who then shall blame
His pestered senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there ?

S C E N E III.

But in this Scene, the tyrant gives a just and shocking description of such a character himself, speaking in and of his own person :

Macbeth. I have lived long enough—My way † of life
Is fall'n into the fear ‡, the yellow leaf ;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have ; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep ; mouth-hornage §, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.

* This speech is spoken by Monteth in the original, but I thought it needless to encumber the Drama with an additional character, for so few lines.

† *Way*, for *stage*.

‡ *Sear*, is *dry* : by which he alludes to the autumn of his life, as is plain from the next expression of *the yellow leaf*.

§ I have substituted *homage* for *honour*, as the latter word is made use of just before.

S C E N E V.

The effect of habitual guilt, in blunting all the fine feelings of the human heart, is well noted here.

Macbeth, *on hearing a cry within,*

I have almost forgot the taste of fears ;
The time has been my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night shriek, and my fell * of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir,
As life were in't. I have supped full with horrors ;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

He then falls into a reflection on the nature of human life, which presents us with but a melancholy prospect of our present state of existence.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time ;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle !
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more ! It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing !

*

*

*

P O S T S C R I P T.

As I cannot bear the thought of suffering the last gloomy passage cited in the foregoing remarks, to dwell upon my Reader's mind, which, by tempting him to repine at the ways of Providence, might give him cause to lament his having ever been sent into such a *world of woe*, I shall endeavour to argue, as far as I am able, against such representations of life as our author frequently gives us of our condition in it, and in which he is too generally seconded by many of the more professed writers on Morality.

* *Fell* is the *scalp* or skin of the head, through which the hair grows.

These

These philosophers are apt to speak too severely, upon the sum of human life; but only seem to condemn it from distinct parts, and particular instances, which vice, folly, passions, casualty, or intemperance, too often furnish for observation. But I shall here venture to treat this subject more impartially, by considering it upon the whole, and according to the general state or condition in which the great Author of Nature has most benevolently supplied it to us.

We are created with five perfect senses, and the world is stored with variety of objects to afford pleasures to them all; and these we are naturally framed to retain the possession of, even to the full term of life prescribed by the Psalmist, of *threescore years and ten*; till that period of time, when we may ourselves become weary of a longer continuance here, not from the *disgust* of our disappointments, but merely from the *satiety* of our enjoyments. And though our strength may then, or even before, become weakness, it may not, however, be encumbered either with decrepitude or pain: and even to the last we may be still capable of using as much exercise, as age requires; or if any accidental ail should render more necessary, an horse may restore the full benefit, at least, though perhaps not the use, of our limbs.

Let us add to these, the pleasures of hope, imagination, reflection, reading, science, conversation, love, friendship,

“ Relations dear, and all the charities

“ Of father, son, and brother.”

Even our most moderate satisfactions and enjoyments, though their impressions may not be so sensibly felt, during their continuance, yet if their *moment* be calculated, by multiplying the degree into the duration, we shall find the amount to exceed the quantity of more poignant but shorter sensations.

Let

Let us also take into our account the vicissitude and variety of seasons, with the alternation of day and night;

“ Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
 “ With charm of earliest birds ; pleasant the sun,
 “ When first on this delightful land he spreads
 “ His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
 “ Glitt’ring with dew ; fragrant the fertile earth
 “ After soft show’rs ; and sweet the coming on
 “ Of grateful evening mild ; then silent night
 “ With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 “ And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train.”

Thus are described the delights of Eden, by a Poet so enamoured of the beauties of Nature, that he has certainly exerted his utmost powers to enhance her charms ; and yet even Milton’s imagination was not able to transcend the reality of those objects and enjoyments, which our common fields and gardens afford us every day.

This is the common life of man ; this the condition of the yeoman, the husbandman, the labourer, the artist, the mechanic, the servant—the *many* of mankind. And where sickness, pain, loss of any sense or limb, happens to the lot of individuals, this is not according to the *course* of Nature, but rather a *violence* against it. And these accidents afflict not the *many*, but the *few* ; nor is Providence any more answerable for the *natural*, than for the *moral*, ills of life : one is but incidental to the general constitution and necessity of things, and the other to the appetites and free-will of man.

But sloth, luxury, ambition, vicious passions, envy, hatred, and malice, may render some diseased in body, and others discontented in mind. This is not, however, the *condition* of their nature, but the *corruption* of it ; and these are still not the *many*, but the *few* ; not the *body* of the people, but the *excre-scences* which arise out of it, and must be nourished at its cost—namely, the great, the opulent, and the proud.

—“ The

————“ The happiness of life
 “ Depends on our discretion———
 “ Look into those they call *unfortunate*,
 “ And closer view’d, you’ll find they are *unwise* ;
 “ Some flaw in their own conduct lies beneath ;
 “ And ’tis the trick of fools to save their credit,
 “ Which brought another language into use.”

The REVENGE.

If what I have here said, upon this comparative view of human nature, were not true, Providence must have shewn a manifest partiality to the inferior creation, which is certainly placed in an happier state than man, according to some—to many writers. But Plato speaks upon this subject with a much better philosophy than any of these moral sophisters, when he says, that “ God is good, for he bestows all that
 “ is good upon all creatures, *according to their several*
 “ *capacities*. Each is as happy as it can be ; or, *as*
 “ *its nature permits* ; and if any thinks the several
 “ creatures could have been happier, it is because
 “ *he does not understand their natures* .”

*Who sees not Providence all good and wise,
 Alike in what it gives, and what denies ?*

POPE.

It may not be improper to quote a passage here, out of a letter from Mr Pope to Doctor Swift, upon the subject of his *Essay on Man*.

“ I am just now (says he) writing, or rather planning, a book, to bring mankind to look upon this
 “ life with comfort and pleasure, *and put morality in*
 “ *good humour with itself*.”

This is the true philosophy of sense and virtue. Gloomy minds are deficient in both.

C O R I O L A N U S.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.

COMINIUS.

MENENIUS AGRIPPA.

BRUTUS.

SICINIUS.

SENATORS.

CITIZENS.

W O M E N.

VOLUMNIA.

VIRGILIA.

C O R I O L A N U S.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter a Number of mutinous Citizens armed with various Weapons.

First Citizen. **B**EFORE we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All. Speak, speak.

First Citizen. You are all resolved rather to die than to famish ?

All. Resolved, resolved.

First Citizen. First, you know Caius Marcius is the chief enemy to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

First Citizen. Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict ?

All. No more talking on't, let it be done. Away, away.

Second Citizen. One word, good citizens.

First Citizen. We are accounted poor citizens, the Patricians good. What authority surfeits on, would relieve us. If they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely ; but they think we are too dear *. The leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance ; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes † ; for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

The nature and reasoning of all mutinous caballers are fully shewn in the above short scene. The common people are apt to impute all national grievances or calamities to the fault of their rulers, tho' ever so unavoidable from the nature of things, failure of seasons, or other incidental misfortunes whatsoever. If freedom of speech and the liberty of the press were not restrained in Turkey, I make no

* Not worth the charge of maintaining.

† This miserable clinch is not worth the trouble of correcting or explaining.

doubt but a Mussulman populace would charge the plague to the account of their Sultans or their Viziers.

In the same scene, that abatement of esteem and praise, which is the natural consequence of persons appearing to over-rate their own merits, more especially when this is betrayed by shewing pride or contempt to others, is very justly remarked on.

Second Citizen. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

All. Against him first. He's a very dog to the commonalty.

Second Citizen. Consider you what services he has done for his country?

First Citizen. Very well; and could be content to give him good report for't; but that *he pays himself with being proud.*

All. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

First Citizen. I say unto you what he hath done famously, he did it to that end. Though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it *to please his mother*, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

The above expression, of *to please his mother*, is taken verbatim from Plutarch, who, in the Life of Coriolanus, says of him, "The end which others proposed in their acts of valour, was glory; but he pursued glory, *because the acquisition of it delighted his mother.*"

Though this seems to be a childish reason, yet 'tis very well to be accounted for. His father died when Caius Marcius was but an infant; the care of his education then devolved upon the mother, who gave him his first lessons of bravery and honour, and took pains to inspire his youth with that martial spirit which she thought became a Roman and a Patriarchian. It was natural, then, that his exploits should still bear a reference to the person under whose tutelage he had been trained to arms.

SCENE

S C E N E II.

Here Menenius Agrippa expostulates with the unruly populace, in a manner conformable to my first remark on the preceding Scene.

Menenius. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours,

Will you undo yourselves?

Citizen. We cannot, Sir; we are undone already.

Menenius. I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the Patricians of you. For your wants,
Your sufferings in this dearth, you may as well
Strike at the heavens with your staves, as lift them
Against the Roman state; whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong links afunder, than can ever
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth,
The gods, not the Patricians, make it; and
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,
You are transported by calamity
Thither where more attends you; and you slander
The helms o' th' state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

But this argument not quieting the tumult, he proceeds to give them the famous apologue of *The Belly and Members*, borrowed from Æsop; which though already so generally known that it need not be related, yet as the Reader may chuse to see the story in Shakespeare's stile and manner of telling it, I shall supply the fable here, leaving out the several breaks and interruptions of the dialogue in which 'tis recited.

Menenius. Either you must
Confess yourselves wond'rous malicious,
Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you
A pretty tale, it may be you have heard it;
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To stale 't * a little more.
There was a time when all the body's members
Rebelled against the belly; thus accused it—
That only like a gulph it did remain
I' th' midst o' th' body, idle and unactive,

* *Stale it*, to render it more *stale*, by repeating it. Thobald. The word in the text is *scale*.

Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
 Like labour with the rest ; where † the other instruments
 Did see, and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
 And mutually participate ; did minister
 Unto the appetite and affection common,
 Of the whole body—The belly answered,
 And tauntingly replied
 To th' discontented members, th' mutinous parts,
 That envied his receipts—Even so, most fitly *,
 As you malign our senators, for that
 They are not such as you—Note me, good friend,
 Your most grave belly was deliberate ;
 Not rash, like his accusers ; and thus answered—
 True is it, my incorporate ‡ friends, quoth he,
 That I receive the general food at first,
 Which you do live upon ; and fit it is,
 Because I am the store-house, and the shop
 Of the whole body. But, if you do remember,
 I send it through the rivers of your blood,
 Even to the court, the heart, to th' seat o' th' brain ;
 And through the cranks § and offices of man,
 The strongest nerves, and small inferior veins,
 From me receive that natural competency,
 Whereby they live. And though that all at once
 You, my good friends, (this says the belly) mark me,
 Though all at once you cannot
 See what I do deliver out to each,
 Yet I can make my audit up, that all
 From me do back receive the *flour* of all,
 And leave me but the *bran*.

He then gives them the exposition of the allegory,
 in the following words :

The senators of Rome are this good belly,
 And you the mutinous members ; for examine
 Their counsels, and their cares, digest things rightly,
 Touching the weal o' th' common, you shall find
 No public benefit which you receive,
 But it proceeds or comes from them to you,
 And no way from yourselves.

† † *Where, for whereas.* Johnson.

‡ ‡ *Fitly, for exactly.* Warburton.

§ The word *incorporate* has a double propriety in this place, as applying equally to the body natural and the body politic. The Commentators have given notes upon more insignificant passages.

|| *Cranks*, put here for the circulation of the blood, and other juices of the body. *Crank* signifies a winding passage.

S C E N E III.

Here Coriolanus, in a stile of austerity and haughtiness, which he preserves through the whole of his spirited but harsh character, rates the malecontent citizens, in a speech which truly describes the nature of every populace in all free states.

He that will give good words to thee, will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would ye have, ye curs,
That likes * nor peace, nor war? The one affrights you,
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese; you are no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue † is,
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,
And curse that justice did it ‡. Who deserves greatness,
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man's appetite; who desires most that
Which would encrease his evil—He that depends
Upon your favours, *swims with fins of lead,*
And hews down oaks with rushes—Hang ye—Trust ye?
With every minute you do change a mind,
And call him noble that was now your hate;
Him vile, that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in the several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another?

And afterwards, speaking of them to Menenius, he adds,

They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know
What's done i' th' Capitol; who's like to rise;
Who thrives, and who declines; side factions, and give out
Conjectural marriages §; making parties strong,
And feeble such as stand not in their liking,
Below their cobbled shoes.

* *Likes*, instead of *like*, *nor peace, nor war*. Whose dispositions being both cowardly and insolent, are neither suited to a state of peace or war.

† *Virtue*, for *nature*, or *quality*.

‡ This passage surely needed an explanation to all but the quick conceptions of the Commentators, who have therefore neglected it. The meaning I take to be this: *You would chant out hymns of triumph to the conqueror who should enslave, while you'd rise in arms against the laws that would restrain you.*

§ *Marriages*, for *leagues*, or *alliances*.

S C E N E VI.

This place affords us a description of the characteristic *Roman Matron* of those times, set in contrast with the *Woman of Nature*.

Volumnia, the Mother, and Virgilia, the Wife of Coriolanus, after he had marched against the Volscians.

Volumnia. I pray you, daughter, sing, or express yourself in a more comfortable sort. If my son were my husband, I would freelier rejoice in that absence, wherein he won honour, than in the embracements of his bed, where he would shew most love. When yet he was but tender bodied, and the only son of my hope; when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze that way; when, for a day of a king's entreaties a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding; I, considering how honour would become such a person, that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir, was pleased to see him seek danger, where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him, from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak *. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man child, than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

Virgilia. But had he died in the business, madam, how then?

Volumnia. Then his good report should have been my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely. Had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather eleven die nobly for their country, than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

There appears to be a vast difference here between the sentiments of these two matrons; but this may well be accounted for from the difference of their situations and circumstances of life. *Volumnia*, having been left a widow, in the infancy of her son, and taking upon herself the charge of his education, had, it may be supposed, soon silenced the tenderness of a mother in her breast, and assumed the spirit of a father, to fulfil her trust; and by constantly endeavouring to inspire her pupil with the chief virtues of a Roman, magnanimity, and love of his country, she may be said in a manner to have educated herself at the same time to bravery, fortitude, and contempt of death.

* The *civic wreath*, given as a mark of distinction to those who had saved the life of a citizen in battle.

S C E N E IX.

The true character of a soldier is well described, in this Scene. When Coriolanus, in the heat of battle, and covered with blood, demands a fresh supply of troops from Cominius, the General answers,

Take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.

Coriolanus. Those are they

That are most willing. If any such be here,
As it were sin to doubt, that love this painting, [*front.*]
Wherein you see me smeared; if any fear [*pointing to his bloody*
Less for his person than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country's dearer than himself,
Let him alone, or, many, if so minded,
Wave thus t' express his disposition, [*Waving his hand.*
And follow Marcius.

A C T II. S C E N E II.

That warmth of affection with which Menenius greets good news from his friend, must charm the sensible Reader. On hearing that Coriolanus had defeated the Volscians, and written a letter to him on that occasion, he cries out in transport,

Take my cap *, Jupiter, and I thank thee. Hoo! Marcius coming home! I will make my house reel to-night. . . .
A letter for me! It gives me an estate of seven years health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician †; the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiric; and, to this preservative, of no better report ‡ than a horse-drench.

And again, in the next Scene, upon meeting him, he expresses the fulness of his heart, which exceeds even to pain, in very strong and apt terms:

A hundred thousand welcomes—I could weep,
And I could laugh; I'm light and heavy—Welcome!

* Meaning I'll throw up my cap to the skies for joy. Doctor Warburton changes the word to *cup*, as designing a libation of thanks—I think unnecessarily.

† Scorn the aid of physic.

‡ Of no more value or estimation.

These speeches have a double beauty in them, if 'tis considered by whom they are delivered. It would not have near the effect upon the Reader, if spoken by a more stayed and sober person; for virtues are apt to strike us more forcibly in slight characters, than in solid ones; and Menenius has already given us a description of himself, in the preceding Scene, which sufficiently justifies me in this distinction:

I am known to be a humorous Patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine, without a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect, in favouring the first complaint ¶; hasty and tinder-like, upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night, than with the forehead of the morning. What I think, I utter; and spend my malice in my breath.

S C E N E III.

As I have quoted several descriptions of character, before, in the course of this work, for the reason already given in its proper place, as being within the prescription of moral; and besides that those were merely imaginary, though truly copied from real life, I think that this one of Coriolanus, being sufficiently vouched from authentic story †, ought, therefore, to be more particularly remarked upon in these notes.

In the first Scene of the former Act, in a passage above quoted, second remark, one of the discontented citizens charges him with paying himself for his services, *with being proud*; and his reproach was just. But yet here he seems to appear in a light the very reverse of such a character; for when the herald, in the voice of Rome, is proclaiming his merits, he stops him short, by crying out,

No more of this; it does offend my heart.
Pray now, no more.

¶ Apt too quickly to follow the suggestions of my appetite.

† Plutarch, Livy, &c.

He manifests the same modesty also, in the Sixth Scene following. When he appears to be uneasy in his seat, upon the applause given him for his prowess, one of the senators says to him,

Sit, Coriolanus, never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.

To which he replies,

Your honour's pardon—
I'd rather have my wounds to heal again,
Than hear say how I got them.

Brutus. Sir, I hope,
My words disbenched you not*.

Coriolanus. No, Sir; yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words—
You soothe not, therefore hurt not; but your people,
I love them as they weigh.

Menenius. Pray now, sit down.

Coriolanus. I had rather have one scratch my head i' th' sun,
When the alarm were struck, than idly sit,
To hear my *nothings* monstered †.

Menenius. You see, [To the people.
He had rather venture all his limbs, for honour,
Than one of 's ears, to hear it.

Afterwards, Cominius speaking of him, says,

Our spoils he kicked at,
And looked upon things precious, as they were
The common muck o' th' world; he covets less
Than misery ‡ itself would give, rewards
His deeds with doing them, and is content
To spend his time, to *spend* it ||.

Again, when he is pressed to harangue the people, in order to get himself elected Consul, he answers in the same stile and spirit of character,

I beseech you,
Let me o'er-leap that custom; for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked ¶, and intreat them,

* This alludes to a speech of his in this Scene, not quoted here, where he charges Coriolanus with his contempt of the people.

† *Monstered*, so much wondered at.

‡ *Misery*, for *avarice*.

|| To do great actions for the sake of doing them. The comment, and the alteration of the text, from *end it* to *spend it*, is Doctor Johnson's.

¶ Exposing his body to shew his wounds.

For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrages—
Please you that I may pass this doing.

Sicinius. Sir, the people must have their voices,
Nor will they bate one jot of ceremony.

Menenius. Put them not to't—Pray, fit you to the custom,
And take t' ye, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with your form.

Coriolanus. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people. . . .
'To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus—
Shew them th' unaching scars, which I would hide,
As if I had received them for the hire
Of their breath only.

But these seeming contradictions form, in effect, but one character still. The over-valuing his merits, and the under-valuing the applause of them, are both equally founded in pride, fierceness, and impatience. Plutarch draws a comparison of Coriolanus with Alcibiades; but I think he more resembles Achilles, as described by Horace :
“ Vigilant, irascible, inflexible, harsh, and above
“ all laws; acknowledging no rights, but those of
“ conquest *.”

Let us now return to the third Scene, again, from whence the pursuit of our subject had tempted us to wander.

When Coriolanus comes home victorious from the Volscian war, his family and friends gather about him, complimenting and congratulating him on his bravery and success; all but Virgilia, his wife, whose heart being fuller of joy and fondness than them all put together, was therefore rendered incapable of uttering a syllable on that occasion—Upon which he salutes her thus :

My gracious silence, hail !

Doctor Warburton gives the following note upon this passage : “ The epithet joined to *silence* shews

* *Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis.*

“ it not to proceed from fullness or reserve, but
 “ to be the effect of a virtuous mind possessing it-
 “ self in peace. The expression is extremely sub-
 “ lime; and the sense of it conveys the finest praise
 “ that can be given to a woman.”

I perfectly agree with the Doctor in his opinion, both of the beauty of the expression, and the merit of the character implied in it. I have taken the liberty of leaving out the adjunct, *good*, joined to the last word, in his note, as being superfluous in that place; for no *bad* one can possibly deserve praise.

S C E N E VII.

Coriolanus preserves still the same kind of indomitable sturdiness and severity, in the following speech; where he also takes occasion, very justly, to censure the superstitious reverence the world is too apt to bear towards customs which are not founded in reason.

When he has, with infinite difficulty, been prevailed upon by his friends to solicit votes for the Consulate, and having obtained them, being left alone, he speaks thus to himself:

Most sweet voices——

Better it is to die, better to starve,
 Than crave the hire, which first we do deserve.
 Why in this woolvish * gown should I stand here,
 To beg of Hob and Dick that do appear,
 Their needless voucher? Custom calls me to't—
 What custom wills in all things, should we do't,
 The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
 And mountainous error be too highly heapt,
 For truth to o'er-peer—Rather than fool it so,
 Let the high office and the honour go
 To one that would do thus.

*

*

*

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

The difference between the philosophy we preach, and that we practise, is properly distinguished in this Scene.

* The candidates gown was made of rough undyed wool.

When

When Coriolanus is going into exile, and taking leave of his family and friends, he endeavours to restrain the immoderate grief of his mother on that occasion, by repeating those stoical precepts to her, which she had often inculcated to him during the term of his pupilage.

Coriolanus. Come, leave your tears—A brief farewell. The beast
With many heads butts me away—Nay, mother,
Where is your antient courage? You were used
To say, extremity was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That, when the sea was calm, all boats alike
Shewed master-ship in floating. Fortune's blows
When most struck home, being gentle, wounded, craves
A noble cunning*. You were used to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conned them.

Volumnia. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations perish!

Coriolanus. What! what! what!
I shall be loved, when I am lacked—Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit when you were wont to say,
If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,
Droop not; adieu—Farewel, my wife! my mother!
I'll do well yet—Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are falter than a younger man's,
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,
I've seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hard'ning spectacles—Tell these sad women,
'Tis fond † to wail inevitable strokes,
As 'tis to laugh at them.

S C E N E III.

In the following speech, there is too true a picture given of the instability of human friendships and connections.

Coriolanus. Oh, world, thy slippery turns! friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,

* This passage is confusedly expressed—The meaning is, that when fortune has given us severe blows, to preserve a mild or gentle temper under our wounds, requires a well practised *philosophy*; which he calls *cunning*, as being a difficult art or science.

† 'Tis weak, idle, or foolish.

Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal and exercise,
 Are still together ; who twine, as 'twere, in love
 Unseparable ; shall, within this hour,
 On a dissention of a doit, break out
 To bitterest enmity. So fellest foes,
 Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep,
 To take the one the other, by some chance,
 Some trick †, not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends,
 And inter-join their issues.

A C T V. S C E N E I.

Menenius, when he is going to parley with Coriolanus, on the part of Rome, makes a speech which shews a perfect knowledge of human nature ; for certainly a proper attention to times, seasons, and circumstances, goes a considerable way towards the success of our requests.

I'll undertake it.
 I think he'll hear me—Yet to bite his lip,
 And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.
 He was not taken well, he had not dined—
 The veins unfilled, our blood is cold, and then
 We pout upon the morning, are unapt
 To give, or to forgive ; but when we've stuff'd
 These pipes, and these conveyances of blood,
 With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
 Than in our priest-like fasts. Therefore I'll watch him,
 Till he be *dieted* to my request,
 And then I'll set upon him.

S C E N E III.

Coriolanus, upon seeing his wife, mother, and son, come habited in mourning, to solicit in favour of Rome, says,

My wife comes foremost, then the honoured mould
 Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand,
 The grand-child to her blood—But, out, Affection !
 All bond and privilege of nature break !
 Let it be virtuous, to be obstinate. [*Virgilia bends.*]
 What is that curt'sie worth ? Or those dove's eyes,
 Which might make gods forsworn ? I melt, and am not
 Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows,
 As if Olympus to a mole-hill should

† Some slight occasion, or trivial motive.

In supplication nod ; and my young boy
 Hath an aspect of intercession, which
 Great Nature cries, *Deny not*—Let the Volsians
 Plough Rome, and harrow Italy ; I'll never
 Be such a gosling to obey instinct ; *but stand*
As if a man were author of himself,
And knew no other kin.

Coriolanus has here carried his sternness, and the strained principles of stoical pride, whose throne is only *in the mind*, as far as they could go ; and now great Nature, whose more sovereign seat of empire is *in the heart*, takes her turn to triumph ; for upon the joint prayers, tears, and intreaties of his family, he becomes *a man*, at last, crying out —

Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
 Requires nor child, nor woman's face to see—
 I've sat too long. *[Endeavours to go, but is withheld.]*

And afterwards, being quite overcome by his affections, he thus exclaims :

O, mother, mother !
[Holding her hands, and keeping silent for some time.]
 What have you done ? Behold, the heavens do ope,
 The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
 Do laugh at *. Oh, my mother, mother, oh !
 You've won a happy victory to Rome ;
 But for your son—Believe it, oh, believe it—
 Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
 If not most mortal to him—Let it come—

The expressions in the first part of this latter speech, with the prophetic conclusion of it, are taken almost literally from Plutarch, in his Life of Coriolanus.

* Look down with contempt on the unequal strife between pride and nature.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

JULIUS CÆSAR.
MARK ANTONY.
BRUTUS.
CASSIUS.
OCTAVIUS.
METELLUS CIMBER.
MESSALA.
LUCILIUS.
ARTEMIDORUS.

W O M E N.

NONE.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

IN this Scene there is a notion delivered, which may be productive of good or bad effects, according to the characters of the persons who embrace it. In rational and virtuous minds, it may inspire an active pursuit of fortune, in whatever profession or scene of life they are engaged in; but in weak or wicked natures, may betray to hazardous schemes, or tempt to vicious courses. The same principle has made generals and admirals of common soldiers and sailors; chancellors and bishops of attorneys' clerks and sizers*, on the one part; projectors, conspirators, usurpers, and assassins, on the other.

*Cassius. Men at some times are masters of their fates;
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
Brutus and Cæsar? What should be in that Cæsar?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with them,
Brutus will start a spirit, as soon as Cæsar—
Now in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat does this our Cæsar feed,
That he is grown so great?*

S C E N E IV.

There is a truly philosophic reflection made here, on the several characters of men, taken both from their persons and manners. This is one of the many instances of our Author's knowledge and observation upon human nature.

Cæsar and Antony.

Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a-nights;

* *Singer*, the lowest rank of students in an University.

Yon

Yon Cassius has a lean and hungry look ;
He thinks too much—Such men are dangerous.

Antony. Fear him not, Cæsar, he's not dangerous ;
He is a noble Roman, and well given.

Cæsar. 'Would he were fatter—But I fear him not—
Yet if my name* were liable to fear,
I do not know the man I should avoid,
So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much ;
He is a great observer ; and he looks
Quite through the deeds of men. He loves no plays,
As thou dost, Antony ; he hears no music ;
Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort,
As if he mocked himself, and scorned his spirit,
That could be moved to smile at any thing.
Such men as he be never at heart's ease,
Whilst they behold a greater than themselves ;
And therefore are they very dangerous.

S C E N E V.

Brutus and Cassius.

Brutus, speaking of Cæsar.

What a blunt fellow is this grown to be !
He was quick mettle, when he went to school.

Cassius. So is he, now, in execution
Of any bold or noble enterprize,
However he puts on this tardy form.
*This rudeness is a sauce to his good wit,
Which gives men stomach to digest his words
With better appetite.*

The above is a sort of character we often meet with in life, and which has generally the effect here attributed to it.

In the same Scene there is a just and prudent maxim set forth, with regard to the persons and characters that men should associate themselves with, who would preserve either their understanding, their honour, or integrity.

Cassius. Well, Brutus, thou art noble ; yet, I see,
Thy honourable metal may be wrought

* I was tempted to change this word to *mind*, as being more intelligible ; but I recollected that Shakespeare meant to make Cæsar affect to speak of his *name*, as his *person*—He says afterwards, in the same speech, *For always I am Cæsar* ; and throughout in the same stile.

From what it is disposed ; therefore, *'tis meet*
That noble minds keep ever with their likes ;
For who so firm, that cannot be seduced ?

Some moral writer says, “ That if men of sense, taste, or virtue, have not an opportunity of conversing with their equals, they had much better live alone.” They will certainly be able to preserve these rare qualities much better in solitude, than in unequal society—There is a contagion in minds and manners, as well as in bodies, when corrupt.

* * *

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Brutus, *solus*.

It must be by his death ; and, for my part,
 I have no personal cause to spurn at him :
 But for the general—He would be crowned ;
 How that might change his nature, there's the question.
 It is the bright day that brings forth the adder,
 And that craves wary walking—Crown him—that—
 And then I grant we put a sting in him,
 That at his will he may do danger with.
 Th' abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
 Remorse from power ; and, to speak truth of Cæsar,
 I have not known when his affections swayed
 More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,
 That lowliness is young Ambition's ladder,
 Whereto the climber upwards turns his face ;
 But when he once attains the utmost round,
 He then unto the ladder turns his back,
 Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
 By which he did ascend. So Cæsar may—
 Then, lest he may, prevent—And since the quarrel
 Will bear no colour, for the thing he is *,
 Fashion it thus ; that what he is, augmented,
 Would run to these and these extremities ;
 And therefore think him as a serpent's egg,
 Which, hatched, would, as his kind, grow mischievous ;
 And kill him in the shell.

In this soliloquy, or self-debate, upon the intended assassination of Cæsar, the too common frailty of

* We have no pretence for destroying him, from his present appearance of character.

man in the circumstances of successful ambition, is strongly described, under two very just and poetical images; but the inference drawn from it in the conclusion, is certainly carried too far. It might, perhaps, have become an Heathen to prevent an ill, without respecting the means; but a Christian, thank God, is forbidden *to do evil, even though good should come of it.*

In the continuance of this soliloquy, Brutus gives a strong description of the state of mind which precedes the execution of any great or hazardous purpose.

Since Cassius first did whet me against Cæsar,
I have not slept.
Between the acting of a dreadful thing,
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream;
The genius and the mortal instruments *
Are then in council; and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

Mr. Addison, in his Cato, has a reflection of the same kind; but it would be illiberal to quote it here, after the strength of imagery and expression in this of Shakespeare's—Besides, indeed, as Doctor Warburton candidly allows, “There was a great difference between the two occasions”—Even as much, we may add, as there is between the two speeches.

SCENE II.

The needlessness of oaths to bind compacts between honest men, to which, indeed, might be added the insufficiency of them to bind knaves, is well urged in this place.

When the cautious Cassius proposes to the conspirators that they shall all enter into a solemn covenant together, to sanctify their mutual engagements,

* He supposes a struggle between the good genius and the passions,

the nobler Brutus opposes it, in the following words :

No, not an oath. If not the face of men *,
 The sufferance of our souls, the times abuse,
 If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
 And ev'ry man hence to his idle bed;
 So let high-fighted tyranny range on,
 'Till each man drop by lottery—But if these,
 As I am sure they do, bear fire enough
 To kindle cowards, and to steel with valour
 The melting spirits of women; then, countrymen,
 What need we any spur, but our own cause,
 To prick us to redress? What other bond,
 Than secret Romans that have spoke the word,
 And will not palter †? And what other oath,
 Than honesty to honesty engaged,
 That this shall be, or we will fall for it?
 Swear priests, and cowards, and men cautelous,
 Old feeble carrions, and such suffering souls
 That welcome wrongs. Unto bad causes swear
 Such creatures as men doubt; but do not stain
 The even virtue of our enterprize,
 Nor th' insuppressive mettle of our spirits,
 To think that or our cause, or our performance,
 Did need an oath; when every drop of blood,
 That ev'ry Roman bears, and nobly bears,
 Is guilty of a several bastardy,
 If he doth break the smallest particle
 Of any promise that hath past from him.

Cicero is then proposed to be added to their league, and for the following good and prudent reason :

Metellus Cimber. O let us have him, for his silver hairs
 Will purchase us a good opinion,
 And buy men's voices to commend our deeds—
 It shall be said his judgment ruled our hands;
 Our youth and wildness shall no whit appear,
 But all be buried in his gravity.

But he is objected to, on account of a sort of character, which is not uncommon in life, and is justly descriptive also of the person to whom it is applied; who, though certainly a very great man,

* *The face of men*, either the dejected looks of the people, or their countenance and approbation of the measure.

† *To palter*, to *seift*, or *shuffie*.

was, notwithstanding, a vain and self-opinionated one likewise.

Brutus. O name him not ; let us not break with him * ;
For he will never follow any thing
That other men begin.

Afterwards, when Cassius urges the expediency of involving Antony in the same doom with Cæsar, Brutus very nobly refuses to concur, upon the following reasons :

Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
 To cut the head off, and then hack the limbs,
 Like wrath in death, and envy † afterwards ;
 For Antony is but a limb of Cæsar,
 And in the spirit of man there is no blood.
 Oh, that we then could come by Cæsar's spirit,
 And not dismember Cæsar ! But, alas !
 Cæsar must bleed for it—And, gentle friends,
 Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully ;
 Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
 Not hew him as a carcase fit for hounds ;
 And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,
 Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
 And after seem to chide them ‡. This shall make
 Our purpose necessary, and not envious ;
 Which so appearing to the common eyes,
 We shall be deemed *purgers*, not *murderers*.

It were much to be wished, for the sake both of decency and humanity, that such a sentiment as this, was the spirit of laws relative to all capital punishments.—Breaking on the wheel, empaling, and other foreign penalties of death, are horrible even to thought ; and what must they be to the view ! Even our own code, though reckoned milder than our neighbours, is hardly less barbarous ; in the instances of quartering, burning, and pressing to death, if executed according to the full rigour of the sentence. But the hangman, it seems, has more

* *Impart the secret to him.*

† *Envy, for malice.*

‡ This passage is very obscure, and the Commentators, according to their usual supineness, have left it unnoticed. The meaning may be this—Let us impute the act to our passions instigated by our fears, and then appear to lament the violence of their proceedings.

humanity than the legislature, as he is said always to render the criminal senseless, before he proceeds to the severity of the statute. He first kills the *spirit*, the *demon* of the law, and then only executes the *dead* letter of it.

There is a sentiment upon this subject, in a late writing, which I think may very properly be quoted here. “ I would have all laws mild, but executed
“ with the utmost strictness; so that justice and
“ humanity may go hand in hand together. I am
“ not for severe executions; for when the penalty
“ exceeds the offence, it is not *the criminal*, but
“ *human nature* that suffers. Death alone is sufficient to remove the offender*.”

But methinks this argument might be urged still further in favour of clemency—Suppose we should reason thus: “ All laws are a mutual compact of
“ society entered into with itself. The *Many* can
“ confide to the *Few* those rights only, which they
“ respectively possess in themselves. To confer a
“ power of death, then, should seem to imply a
“ *right of suicide*.” I declare myself unable to detect any manner of sophistry, in such a syllogism.

S C E N E IV.

Cæsar. Cowards die many times before their deaths;

The valiant never taste of death, but once—

Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,

It seems to me most strange that men should fear;

Seeing that death, a necessary end,

Will come, when it wil come.

The philosophy of death is well enough argued here, according to the old Stoical doctrine of fate, or predestination. This should seem to be a good notion for a mere foldier; but yet we do not find, in the late *carnage**, that it rendered the Turks braver, who believe in it, than it did the Russians, who do not.

* Series of Letters between Henry and Frances.

† The war between the Czarina and the Porte.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Cæsar speaks a sentence here, which shews him to have been worthy of a better fate.

When Artemidorus, upon seeing the number of papers presented to him on his march to the capital, cries out,

O, Cæsar, read mine first ; for mine's a suit,
That touches Cæsar nearer—Read it, great Cæsar—

he replies, in the true spirit of a prince,

What touches us ourself, shall be last served.

And afterwards, when Metellus Cimber pleads for the repeal of his brother's banishment, he answers him with the proper steadiness of a person intrusted with the executive province of a legislature,

I must prevent thee, Cimber—
These couchings and these lowly curtesies
Might stir * the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
Into the law † of children. Be not fond ‡
To think that Cæsar bears such rebel blood,
That will be thawed from the true quality,
With that which melteth fools ; I mean sweet words,
Low crooked curtesies, and base spaniel-fawning—
Thy brother by decree is banished ;
If thou dost bend, and pray, and fawn, for him,
I spurn thee, like a cur, out of my way—
Know Cæsar doth not wrong ; nor without cause
Will he be satisfied.

I cannot help thinking, that the Poet has not given either Cæsar fair play for his life, or Brutus for his character, in bringing on the assassination so immediately after the one has uttered, and the other heard, the two foregoing speeches.

The last sentence above was not necessary to be quoted, for the purpose of the speech, merely, as far as it had been specified in the note which pre-

* *Stir*, instead of *fire*. Warburton.

† *Law*, instead of *lane*. Of children, whose minds are easily wrought on. Johnson.

‡ Be not so weakly persuaded.

cedes it; but I confess that I was anxious to produce it, in order to take an opportunity of vindicating our Author from an absurdity of expression, which has been so disingenuously imputed to him by his rival, Ben Johnson, who charges him with having wrote that passage thus:

“ Cæsar never did *wrong*, but with *just cause*.”

Now, *O rare Ben Johnson* *, what manner of foundation could’st thou have for such a sarcasm, except in the envious malice of thine own nature? for the very copy from which the present text is taken, was published in thine own life-time.

Or, suppose that the line had really stood as Johnson has pretended to have quoted it, might not any candid critic, who was at all versed in the latitude of expression generally made use of by Shakespeare, have sufficiently obviated the contradiction in the terms, by only construing the word *wrong*, into the sense of *injury*? for a penalty is certainly an *injury* †, though not a *wrong*.

I hope my Reader will not think this note to be any manner of interruption to the general tenor of these remarks, as he must acknowledge that there is a proper moral in defending the Author of this great code of Ethics, from any aspersion thrown out against his sense, meaning, or character.

*

*

*

In the last passage of this Scene, the two principal patriots, Brutus and Cassius, shew a noble spirit, in not endeavouring to support themselves after the deed by *façtion*, in the common sense of the word, trusting solely to the justice and policy they had presumed in the act itself, for their security and defence.

* The epithet by which he is characterised on his tomb.

† In the sense of *hurt*, or *detriment*.

Cassius, speaking to Publius, who was present at the transaction, but not any way concerned in the conspiracy, says,

Leave us, Publius, lest that the people,
Rushing on us, should do your age some mischief.

Brutus. Do so; and let no man abide this deed,
But we the doers.

SCENE II.

Besides that inward complacency which a virtuous person is sensible of in the consciousness of his merits, there is something further in human nature which prompts his reflection forward to the fame which may attend his actions in future times. Our Author has placed this incitement in the strongest light, by delivering the sentiment from the confession of two such stoical interlocutors as the following :

Cassius. How many ages hence,
Shall this our lofty scene be acted o'er,
In states unborn, and accents yet unknown ?

Brutus. How many times shall Cæsar bleed in sport,
That now on Pompey's basis lies along,
No worthier than the dust ?

Cassius. So oft as that shall be,
So often shall the knot of us be called
The men that gave their Country liberty.

SCENE III.

Antony, on seeing the body of Cæsar.

O, mighty Cæsar ! do'st thou lie so low !
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,
Shrunk to this little measure ?

The above exclamation is a dirge which may be justly pronounced over the graves of all heroes or other great men, whose fame is not founded in virtue.

*

*

*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

As the following description falls under the head of Character, for which I have long since opened
an

an account in these remarks, as relative to manners, at least, but often to morals, I shall present it to the Reader; who must have made but little observation on life, if it does not bring many resemblances of the same picture into his mind.

Antony and Octavius, speaking of Lepidus, whom they had just dispatched to bring them Cæsar's will :

Antony. This is a slight unmeritable man,

Meet to be sent on errands,

Octavius. But he's a tried and valiant soldier.

Antony. So is my horse, Octavius; and, for that,

I do appoint him store of provender.

It is a creature that I teach to fight,

To wind, to stop, to run directly on;

His corporal motion governed by my spirit;

And in some taste is Lepidus but so—

He must be taught, and trained, and bid go forth;

A barren-spirited fellow, one that feeds

On abject orts *, and imitations;

Which out of use, and staled † by other men,

Begin his fashion. Do not talk of him,

But as a property.

S C E N E II.

The following passage may be added to the many instances of our Author's knowledge of human nature, collected from his close observations on mankind.

Brutus, having sent Lucilius to Cassius, upon some friendly or confederate business between them, asks him on his return,

A word, Lucilius;

How he received you, let me be resolved.

Lucilius. With courtesy, and with respect enough;

But not with such familiar instances,

Nor with such free and friendly conference,

As he hath used of old.

Brutus. Thou hast described

A hot friend cooling. Ever note, Lucilius,

When love begins to sicken and decay,

* Orts, refuse, scraps, or lumber, of philosophy or literature.

† Become vulgar and common-place.

It useth an enforced ceremony.

There are no tricks in plain and simple faith ;
But hollow men, like horses hot at hand,
Make gallant shew, and promise of their mettle ;
But when they should endure the bloody spur,
They fall their crest, and, like deceitful jades,
Sink in the trial.

SCENE V.

Brutus, on hearing of his wife's death :

Why, farewell, Portia. We must die, Messala.
With meditating that she must die once,
I have the patience to endure it now.

Cassius. I have as much of this, in art, as you,
But yet my nature could not bear it so.

Here Brutus speaks like a *Stoic*, and Cassius like a
man. Such instances of apathy are not captivating.

A little after he says,

The deep of night is crept upon our talk,
And Nature must obey necessity,
Which we will niggard with a little rest.

Now, pray, why should Nature be more obedient to
necessity in *sleeping* than in *weeping* ? She has her
course in both, let proud man boast what he will.

A modern writer asks very justly, *Why we should
be more ashamed of weeping than of laughing ? The first
emotion*, says he, *arises from nobler motives, and more
generous principles*. Man has been defined to be a
ridiculous animal. Methinks it would be more for the
honour of his nature to have been stiled a *lachrymate
one*, understanding the expression in a moral sense, by
distinguishing between the effect of *pain* and *grief*.

Further on, in the same Scene, the critical con-
tingencies of human life are finely illustrated by an
apt and beautiful simile.

Brutus. There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows, and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

ACT

ACT V. SCENE III.

Brutus. O that a man might know
The end of this day's business, ere it come !
But it sufficeth that the day will end ;
And then the end is known.

Here the disciple of Zeno *, being *off his guard*, betrays a portion of human frailty, in his curiosity and anxiety about the event of the battle; but upon *recollecting* his philosophy, he recovers himself to his *posture of defence* again. Such pretenders are but *performers* †, when closely examined.

SCENE V.

When Cassius has killed himself, through despair, from his having mistaken the appearances of an action which had turned out in his favour, our author makes a just reflection upon the fatal effects of error and precipitancy.

Messala. Mistrust of good success hath done this deed.
Oh, hateful Error, Melancholy's child ;
Why dost thou shew to the apt ‡ thoughts of men
The things that are not ? O Error, soon conceived,
Thou never com'st unto a happy birth,
But kill'st the mother that engender'd thee.

SCENE IX.

I shall here conclude my remarks upon this Play, with that fine character which Antony draws of Brutus, in the generous elogy he makes upon his death.

This was the noblest Roman of them all —
All the conspirators, save only he,
Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar ;
He, only, in a general honest thought,
And common good to all, made one of them.
His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up,
And say to all the world—*This was a man.*

* Father of the Stoic philosophy.

† *Actors of parts.*

‡ *Apt for quick, credulous, easily alarmed*

P O S T S C R I P T.

The affassination of Cæsar is a fact famous in history ; but notwithstanding the heroic opinion which the world has been taught to conceive of it, I confess that I have ever reputed its *fame* as a matter of *notoriety* rather than of *applause*.

I shall only consider this action in the person of Brutus alone, because it has been thought that he was the only one among the conspirators who had engaged in it upon principle solely, as Antony has said above.

Plutarch has debated this subject, in his comparison of Brutus with Dion ; and, in my opinion, seems to condemn it, upon the whole. At least, if we take in the character he there draws of Cæsar, with the state and circumstances of the Commonwealth at that political crisis, it plainly appears that he meant to declare against it.

His words are : “ With respect to Cæsar, though, whilst his imperial power was in its infancy, he treated his opponents with severity ; yet, as soon as that power was confirmed, the tyranny was rather a *nominal*, than a *real* thing ; for no tyrannical action could be laid to his charge. Nay, such was the condition of Rome then, that it evidently required a *master* ; and Cæsar was no more than a *tender and skilful physician, appointed by Providence to heal the distempers of the state*. Of course the people lamented his death, and were implacably enraged against his *assassins*.”

Cowley, in his fine Ode to Brutus, brings heavy charges also against him, on account of this action ; though he seems only to do so, in order to vindicate him from them. But then he does not pretend to defend him, from the facts themselves, justifying him only upon the higher principle which had rendered him *guilty* of them.

However,

However, I think that he is severer upon his hero even than Plutarch, by mentioning that weak and unphilosophic exclamation of his, where he says, *he had mistaken virtue for a good, but found it only a name.*

“ What can we say, but thine own tragic word ?

“ That *virtue*, which had worshipped been by thee,

“ As the most solid *good*, and greatest *deity*,

“ By this fatal proof became

“ An *idol* only, and a *name*.”

This circumstance his Biographer had favourably suffered to pass unnoticed ; and of which Balzac says, “ that Brutus seems to lament his disappointment “ here, *as if he was upbraiding a jilting mistress.*” If he had acted solely from *virtue*, he would not have complained that he had missed the *reward*.

But though the principle might have been ever so right, in itself, the action was certainly wrong, in him. There are duties involved in duties, sometimes, which may counteract each other, and thereby render what might be the *virtue* of one person, the *vice* of another. Many situations and cases of this kind may be proposed ; but I shall not launch beyond my subject.

Brutus had many and great obligations to Cæsar. He owed him his life—nay, ’tis said, even his *first life** ; and had the lives of several of his friends saved also at his intercession. He had ever lived with him in the greatest intimacy, and on the footing of his *first friend*. Nay, Cæsar had created himself enemies, by his partiality towards him, in the preferring him to posts of profit and honour, which others, from their services, were better intitled to. One of these malecontents was Cassius, who from that very resentment became the first mover and principal actor in the conspiracy. And were all these obligations to be cancelled by one dash of the *Stoic’s pen* ?

* Cæsar had an amour with Servilia, the mother of Brutus, before his birth.

Stoical virtues are not always *moral ones*. Those metaphysical *braveries* (for I was wrong in calling them *virtues*) which exceed the feelings of humanity, have never, as I said before †, been able to inspire my mind with either admiration or esteem.

The sympathy of nature is wanting, and true philosophy has good reason to suspect every principle or motive of action to be sophisticate, that bears not this *original impression*.

† See first observation on Scene I, Act II. and another on first part of Scene V Act IV.

A N T O N Y

A N D

C L E O P A T R A.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

M. ANTONY.
OCTAVIUS CÆSAR.
AGRIPPA.
MECÆNAS.
VENTIDIUS.
ENOBARBUS.
SEXTUS POMPEY.
MENAS.
MENOCRATES.
EROS.
SCARUS.
CLOWN.

W O M E N.

CLEOPATRA.
CHARMIAN, } her Women.
IRAS,

ANTONY and CLEOPATRA.

A C T I. S C E N E III.

THE usefulness of listening to advice, and the expediency of bearing to be admonished of our faults, are well recommended in this place.

Antony to the messenger from Rome, who seems to conceal ill tidings :

Speak to me home, mince not the general tongue ;
Name Cleopatra as she's call'd in Rome ;
Rail thou in Fulvia's * phrase, and taunt my faults,
With such full licence as both truth and malice
Have power to utter—*Oh then we bring forth weeds,*
When our quick minds † be still ! and our ill told us,
Is as our earing ‡.

In the same Scene, the uncertain and wavering mind of man is well described by Antony, upon hearing of his wife's death :

There's a great spirit gone ! Thus did I desire it.
What our contempts do often hurl from us,
We wish it ours again. The present pleasure,
By revolution lowering, does become
The opposite of itself §. She's good, being gone ;
The hand could pull her back, that shov'd her on—
I must from this enchanting queen break off.
Ten thousand harms more than the ill I know,
My idleness doth hatch.

S C E N E V.

Here occurs one of those reflections which Shakespeare abounds in, upon the instability of popular

* *Fulvia*, wife to Antony.

† *Minds*, instead of *Winds*. Warburton.

Earing for ripening.

§ "The allusion is to the sun's diurnal course; which rising in the *east*, and
"by *revolution* lowering, or setting in the *west*, becomes the *opposite to itself*." War-
button.

H h favour ;

favour; and the simile, by which he expresses himself, is admirably suited to the occasion.

Octavius. This common body,
Like to a vagabond * flag upon the stream,
Goes to and back, lacqueying † the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Pompey, Menecrates.

Pompey. If the great gods be just, they shall assist
The deeds of justest men.

Menecrates. Know, worthy Pompey,
That when they do delay, they not deny.

Pompey. While we are suitors to their throne, decays
The thing we sue for ‡.

Menecrates. We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms; which the wise Powers
Deny us, for our good; so find we profit
By losing of our prayers.

The above passage needs no comment, except to observe upon the impatience of one of the speakers, and the resignation of the other. It has often surprized me to see the intemperance of mind which the generality of men are apt to betray, on the ordinary course of Providence, whenever it happens to run counter to their *interests*, or *inclinations* rather; as the sentiment of Menecrates delivered above, renders the first expression doubtful. One would fancy that such people had never laughed at the story of *Xerxes whipping the sea*.

SCENE V.

The last passage in this Scene is descriptive of that natural curiosity with which jealous persons are usually affected, of enquiring anxiously into every article of mind or feature relative to their rivals.

* *Vagabond* for *floating*.

† Comparing the flag fluctuating with the ebbing and flowing of the tide, to a page or lacquey following the motions of his master. Theobald.

‡ His meaning is, that a gift may lose its value, before it is obtained. Health and fortune, for instance, may come too late for enjoyment.

Cleopatra,

Cleopatra, upon being informed of Antony's marriage with Octavia, having first struck the *messenger of ill news*, and drove him off the scene, speaks thus to her women :

Lead me from hence—
 I faint—Oh, Iras, Charmian—'Tis no matter—
 Go to the fellow, good Alexas, bid him
 Report the feature of Octavia; her years,
 Her inclination *.—Let him not leave out
 The colour of her hair. Bring me word, quickly— [*Ex. Alex.*
 Let him for ever go †—Let him not, Charmian,
 Though he be painted, one way, like a *Gorgon*,
 The other way's a *Mars*—Bid you Alexas
 Bring word how tall she is—Pity me, Charmian,
 But speak not to me ‡. Lead me to my chamber.

Queen Elizabeth, according to Sir James Melville's report, made the same kind of minute inquiries from him, about her rival, the queen of Scots.

S C E N E VII.

On board Pompey's vessel. Pompey, Octavius, Antony, Lepidus,
 and Menas.

Menas *aside to Pompey.*

Wilt thou be lord of the whole world?

Pompey. How shall that be?

Menas. Thou art, if thou dar'st be, the earthly Jove;
 Whate'er the ocean pales, or sky inclips,
 Is thine, if thou wilt ha't.

Pompey. Shew me which way.

Menas. These three world-sharers, these competitors §,
 Are in thy vessel—Let me cut the cable,
 And when we are put off, fall to their throats—
 All then is thine.

Pompey. Ah, this thou should'st have done,
 And not have spoken on't—In me, 'tis villainy;
 In thee 't had been good service—Thou must know,
 'Tis not my profit that does lead mine honour;
 Mine honour, it—Repent that e'er they tongue

* Her character or natural disposition.

† Meaning Antony.

‡ This is natural. In great misfortunes we refuse comfort,

§ Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus.

Hath so betrayed thine act—Being done unknown,
 I should have found it afterwards well done;
 But must condemn it now.

The dangerous salvo which men sometimes apply to their consciences, in profiting of *another's* crime, at free cost, as they imagine, is fully exposed in this Scene. But, in morals, there is no difference between the *receiver* and the *thief*; and as *the wages of sin* are pronounced to be *death*, in the Scripture sense of the word, the delinquent who accepts the emoluments of vice, must expect to be included under the same sentence.

*

*

*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Moral writers have been distinguished into two classes of philosophy; whereof one set of them are said to elevate human nature to the rank of angels, while the other depreciates it to the vileness of those, *who had once been so*. But our author represents it more impartially, neither inclining to one side or the other; for there is not, perhaps, a virtue or a vice in mankind, which he has not pointed out to us, in the several characters he has occasionally introduced into his general drama. In this Scene he has afforded us an instance in the latter predicament, by a description of that invidiousness with which men are apt to regard superior merit in others; more especially in those talents, which they are ambitious of shining in themselves.

When Silius advises Ventidius to compleat his conquest over the Parthians, in order to recommend himself the more eminently to the favour of Antony, his general, the old soldier makes a reply, which shews him not only to have been versed in camps, but in courts also.

Oh, Silius, Silius,
 I've done enough. A lower place, note well,
 May make too great an act. For learn this, Silius,

Better

*Better to leave undone, than by our deed
Acquire too high a fame, when he we serve's away.
Cæsar * and Antony have ever won
More in their officer than person. Soffius,
One of my place in Syria, his lieutenant,
For quick accumulation of renown,
Which he atchiev'd by th' minute, lost his favour —
Who does i' th' wars more than his captain cau,
Becomes his captain's captain ; and ambition,
The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss,
Than gain which darkens him.
I could do more to do Antonius good,
But 'twould offend him ; and in his offence
Should my performance perish.*

SCENE II.

Here follow two passages, which for elegance of thought, or beauty of expression, it is not in the power of poetical imagery or language to exceed.

When Octavia is taking leave of her brother Octavius Cæsar, with all the shews of a tender affection, Antony says,

*The April's in her eyes. It is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. Be chearful.*

And afterwards, when she endeavours to speak to him, but cannot, her difficulty is thus described :

*Antony. Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor can
Her heart inform her tongue—the swan's down feather,
That stands upon the swell at full of tide,
And neither way inclines.*

SCENE V.

Octavius, upon seeing his sister returning in a private character to Rome, without having afforded him timely notice to send forth a proper retinue to escort her, says,

*Nay, the dust
Should have ascended to the roof of Heaven,
Raised by your populous troops ; but you are come
A market-maid to Rome ; and have prevented
The ostentation of our love ; which, left unshewn,
Is often left unloved.*

* Octavius Cæsar.

There is something more to be understood, in this last sentiment, than can be perceived on a careless perusal of it. A warm affection within, naturally inspires correspondent emotions without. These are a sort of *setting* of the jewel, which not only ornaments, but helps to preserve it. In all the refined passions, the *delicacy* of a sentiment insures our constancy, even more than the *strength* of it. The nice observances, the *petits soins*, which in such cases may be almost deemed *petites morales*, also, increase the mutual pleasures and confidences of love and friendship. They are the *comets* which feed the *sun*. Even virtue itself, all perfect as it is, requires to be inspirited by passion; for duties are but coldly performed, which are *but philosophically* fulfilled.

Octavius to his Sister.

Cheer your heart—

Be not you troubled with the time which drives

O'er your content these strong necessities ;

But let determined things to *destiny*

Hold unbewail'd their way.

Here is very good advice given, if by the word *destiny* be understood *Providence* ; which must certainly have been what the Antients meant by it, whenever they had any meaning about it at all ; for most of the heathens made use of the expression, as too many Christians often do of an higher one, without affixing any manner of determinate idea to it in their minds. But the old *wisecrates* were not satisfied to leave nonsense where they found it ; they picked up the common speech, and elevated vulgar phrases into philosophical principles. Hence the doctrines, that *Nature* created the world, and that *Fate* governed it, &c.

S C E N E VII.

Here follows a thought, which, though false in the sentiment, is but too true in the practice ; and which, therefore, all men should be taught to be aware of.

Antony,

Antony, taking leave of his friends, after his shameful flight at Actium :

Pray ye, look not sad,
Nor make replies of loathsomeness—Take the hint
Which my despair proclaims. *Let them be left,
Which leave themselves.*

* * *

As my gentle Readers may expect to be treated with a little of the *All for Love* of Antony, in this Play, I shall here quote a passage relative to this subject, which we meet with in the present Scene.

When Cleopatra appears before him, after his defeat *, he addresses himself to her thus :

O, whither hast thou led me, Ægypt ? See
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes, [*Turning from her.*
By looking back on what I've left behind,
'Stroyed in dishonour.

Cleopatra. Oh, my lord, my lord—
Forgive my fearful fails ; I little thought
You would have followed.

Antony. Ægypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by th' string †,
And thou should'st tow me after. O'er my spirit,
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st ; and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.

Cleopatra. Oh, pardon, pardon. [*Weeps.*

Antony. Fall not a tear, I say ; one of them rates
All that is won and lost—Give me a kiss—
Even this repays me.

Shakespeare, in the above instance, appears to have been more galant than Milton, who does not suffer Adam to expostulate so mildly with Eve—

“ Out of my sight, thou serpent.” Book x. l. 867.

However, we are to consider the infinite difference between the worlds that were lost upon those occasions. But as I do not think that the first man was more excusable for following the advice, than the other was for pursuing the galley of his mistress, when such

* Which was occasioned by his quitting the sea-fight at Actium, to pursue Cleopatra's galley when it was sailing away.

† *Heart-string.*

prizes were at stake, their resentments ought to have been expressed only against themselves.

S C E N E IX.

The natural connection and dependance of the inward upon the outward man, as it is here expressed, is well marked in this place.

When Antony, in a fit of despair, goes out to pen a personal challenge to Octavius, the following reflection is made :

Enobarbus. Yes, like enough ; high-battled * Cæsar will
Unitate his happiness, and be staged to th' shew,
Against a sworder—*I see men's judgments are*
A parcel of their fortunes, and things outward
Do draw the inward quality after them,
To suffer all alike—That he should dream,
Knowing all measures, the full Cæsar will
Answer his emptiness ! — Cæsar, thou hast subdued
His judgment too.

In this same Scene, Enobarbus, seeing the downfall of his master's fortunes, enters into debate with himself, whether he shall preserve his fidelity to him still, or shift about, and take part with the conqueror ; in which soliloquy he seems fairly to give the preference to the nobler side of the question, in his argument, though he afterwards determines against it, in his conduct.

But 'tis usually so, in all deliberations of this sort ; for virtue and vice are of such opposite natures, that there is no possibility of bringing them at all into comparison by any sophister whose judgment has not before been rendered partial and corrupt. So that in such cases one may venture generally to pronounce, as the Poet does of women, that *they who deliberate are lost*.

Enobarbus. Mine honesty and I begin to square * ;
The loyalty well held to fools, does make
Our faith mere folly—Yet he that can endure
To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord,
Does conquer him that did his master conquer,
And earns a place i' th' story ||.

* Victorious.

† To square, to quarrel, so used by Shakespeare.

|| In fable or history.

ACT IV. SCENE V.

When Antony is told that Enobarbus had gone over to the enemy, but left his chests and effects behind him, he says,

Go, Eros, send his treasure after—Do it—
Detain no jot, I charge thee—Write to him—
I will subscribe gentle adieus and greetings—
Say that I wish he never find more cause
To change a master. Oh, my fortunes have
Corrupted honest men! Dispatch, my Eros.

There is such an heroic liberality of soul expressed here, as must make one lament the misfortunes of the unhappy Antony, even at this distance of time—for the fact here represented, is taken from historical record. We may justly say of him, as the soldier does here, upon delivering the message to Enobarbus,

Your emperor continues still a Jove.

Antony was not only a braver and a greater, but a better man than his competitor for empire. Augustus was of a worthless, mean, jealous, and vengeful nature; though poets, and *some historians*, have deified him. But princes will have their flatterers. Milton has given one even to the *prince of darkness* *.

SCENE VI.

Here Enobarbus appears to have been equally struck with the generosity of his master, and his own vileness; upon which joint reflection he passes a very just sentence on himself.

I am alone the villain of the earth,
And feel I am so most. O, Antony,
Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have paid
My better service, when my turpitude
Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows † my heart;
If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean
Shall out-strike thought—But thought will do't, I feel.
I fight against thee!—*No, I will go seek
Some ditch, where I may die; the foul'st best fits
My latter part of life.*

* See Beelzebub's compliments to Satan, Book III.

† For *swells*.

S C E N E VIII.

The contrition of Enobarbus was sincere; for here the strong sense of his baseness bursts his swollen heart :

O bear me witness, night !
 Be witness to me, O thou blessed moon !
 When men revolted shall upon record
 Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
 Before thy face repent !
 O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,
 The poisonous damp of night dispunge upon me,
 That life, a very rebel to my will,
 May hang no longer on me* ! O Antony,
 Nobler than my revolt is infamous,
 Forgive me in thine own particular ;
 But let the world rank me in register,
 A master-leaver, and a fugitive—
 Oh Antony ! Oh Antony !

[*Dist.*

I shall not pretend to dispute a knowledge of human nature with Shakespeare, but, if he had not given us a representation of this character, I should hardly have been brought to imagine that a breast capable of harbouring such treachery and villainy, could ever, at the same time, have contained a spirit of so much honour, and so strong a sense of shame.

One of the centinels, upon seeing him sink down on the ground, says to his companion, that he has fallen asleep ; but the other, who had overheard his soliloquy, replies, very justly,

*Swoons, rather ; for so bad a prayer as his,
 Was never yet for sleep.*

S C E N E XI.

In this place our Author describes the vicissitudes of life, and the quick shiftings of fortune, by an apt and beautiful simile.

Antony and Eros.

Antony. Eros, thou yet behold'st me.

Eros. Ay, noble lord.

* I have left out a passage here, which only disgraces this fine speech.

Antony.

Antony. Sometime, we see a cloud that's dragonish ;
 A vapour sometimes like a bear, or lion,
 A tower'd citadel, a pendant rock,
 A forked mountain, or blue promontory,
 With trees upon't that nod unto the world,
 And mock our eyes with air. Thou 'lt seen these signs,
 They are black Vesper's pageants.

Eros. Ay, my lord.

Antony. That which is now a horse, ev'n with a thought,
 The rack * dislimns, and makes it indistinct,
 As water is in water.

Eros. It does, my Lord.

Antony. My good knave †, Eros, now thy captain is
 Ev'n such a body—Here I'm Antony,
 Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.

The rest of the speech is affecting, but relates
 not to the description.

ACT V. SCENE V.

We meet with nothing in this Act worth noting,
 except a speech made by one of Shakespeare's *inspired*
Clowns in this Scene.

I know that a woman is a dish for the Gods, if the Devil
 dress her not.

Milton's fine compliment to the sex, is only This
 expressed with more politeness :

“ O fairest of creation, last and best
 “ Of all God's works !

But the Clown's expression has a peculiar propriety
 in it, here, as being applied to Cleopatra, whose
 vices had *demonised* such distinguished talents, and
 transcendent beauty, as her's.

* This word is explained in my last note on Act IV. of the *Tempest* ; here
 it means only the dissolution of a cloud.

† *Knave*, an old English expression for a servant or attendant.

C Y M B E L I N E.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

JACHIMO.
BELLARIUS.
GUIDERIUS.
ARVIRAGUS.
CLOTEN.
PISANIO.
LUCIUS.

W O M E N.

IMOGEN.

C Y M B E L I N E.

A C T I. S C E N E VIII.

WHEN the insidious Jachimo drops mysterious hints to the guileless Imogen, that he is possessed of some secret relative to her husband, which he hesitates to reveal, she urges him to the discovery of it, in these words :

You do seem to know
 Something of me, or what concerns me. Pray you,
 Since doubting things go ill often hurts more,
 Than to be sure they do ; for certainties,
 Or are past remedies, or timely known
 The remedy's then born ; discover to me
 What both you spur and stop.

The nature of the human mind is well shewn here ; it presses still to know the worst of every apprehended evil ; though not on account of the argument above proposed, which is rather ingenious than just ; but merely to satisfy the impatience, and relieve the suspense of doubt. Providence has certainly a design, in every kind of impression it makes upon its creatures ; and the reason that Imogen gives here, may, perhaps, be its true one, in this case : but what I contend for is, That such a reflection is not the real source of our curiosity upon these occasions. Philosophy may serve to govern our impulses, but is incapable of inspiring them.

A C T III. S C E N E III.

The Reader will require no assistance to note the morality of the reflections in the following speech, as he goes along, and will also be able to recollect the several observations already made upon many similar ones on the same reconciling subject, in the foregoing part of this Work.

Bellarius,

Bellarius, speaking to his two pupils, Guiderius and Arviragus, concealed princes, as they are going a-hunting :

Now for our mountain sport ; up to yon hill,
Your legs are young ; I'll tread these flats—Consider,
When you above perceive me like a crow,
That it is *place*, which lessens and sets off.
And you may then revolve what tales I told you,
Of courts, of princes, of the tricks in war,
Where service is not service, so being done,
But being so allow'd. To apprehend thus,
Draws us a profit from all things we see ;
And often, to our comfort, shall we find
The sharded beetle * in a safer hold,
Than is the full-winged eagle. Oh, this life
Is nobler than attending for a check ;
Richer than doing nothing for a bauble † ;
Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk—
Such gain the cap of him that makes them *fine*,
Yet keeps his book uncross'd ‡. No life to ours.

In the same Scene this subject is renewed again, by the same speaker, with further instances and richer reflections.

Did you but know the city's usuries,
And felt them knowingly ; the art o' th' court,
As hard to leave, as keep ; whose top to climb,
Is certain falling ; or so slippery, that
The fear's as bad as falling ; the toil of war,
A pain that seems to seek out danger,
I' th' name of fame and honour, which dies i' th' search,
And hath as oft a slanderous epitaph,
As record of fair act ; nay, many time,
Doth ill deserve, by doing well ; what's worse,
Must curt'fy at the censure.

S C E N E IV.

Pisanio, speaking of slander, says,

Whose edge is sharper than the sword ; whose tongue
Out-venoms all the worms of *Nile* ; whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belye
All corners of the world. Kings, queens, and states,

* *Sbards* are clefts in timber, between which the beetle is hatched.

† Earning titles or ribbands by mean adulation or court subserviency.

‡ *Unpaid*.

Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave,
This viperous slander enters.

The above passage needs no comment, but what every Reader's experience, either in his own case or that of others, may enable him to supply.

In the same Scene, which is a forest, Imogen, upon reading her mistaken husband's mandate to Pisanio, requiring him to put her to death, on a presumption of her having been false to his bed, thus exclaims :

*False to his bed ! What is it to be false ?
To lie in watch there, and to think on him ?
To weep 'twixt clock and clock ? If sleep charge nature,
To break it with a fearful dream of him,
And cry myself awake ? That's false to's bed ! is't ?*

Nothing, in situation of circumstance, in thought, or expression, can exceed the beauty or tender effect of the above passage. It catches such quick hold of our sympathy, that we feel as if the scene was real, and are at once transported amidst the gloom and silence of the forest, in spite of all the glare of the Theatre, and the loud applause of the audience. It is in such instances as these, that Shakespeare has never yet been equalled, and can never be excelled. What a power of natural sentiment must a man have been possessed of, who could so adequately express that kind of ingenuous surprize upon such a challenge, which none but a woman can possibly feel ! Shakespeare could not only assume all characters, but even their sexes too—This whole Scene is beautiful, but falls not within our rule to transcribe any more of it here. The Commentators are all dumb upon this fine passage—not silent in admiration, but frozen into scholastic apathy. One may say of such cold critics on Shakespeare, what Addison does of lukewarm Christians, “ That *they want parts to be* “ *devout*, and could as soon make an epic poem, “ as a fervent prayer.”

S C E N E VII.

The following speech includes too many different articles in it, to be comprehended under any one general head ; but the Reader will note the several particulars of it, in the perusal.

Imogen, in boy's cloaths, travelling alone through the forest, makes this soliloquy :

I see a man's life is a tedious * one.
 I've tired myself ; and for two nights together
 Have made the ground my bed. *I should be sick,
 But that my resolution helps me. Milford,*
 When from the mountain top *Pisano* shewed thee,
 Thou wast within a ken. *O Jove,* I think,
Foundations fly the wretched. Such, I mean,
 Where they should be relieved. Two beggars told me
 I could not miss my way. Will poor folks lye,
 'That have afflictions on them, *knowing 'tis
 A punishment, or trial ?* Yes ; no wonder,
*When rich ones scarce tell true. To lapse in fulness,
 Is sorer than to lye for need ; and falsehood
 Is worse in kings, than beggars.* My dear lord !
 Thou'rt one o' th' false ones—*Now I think on thee,
 My hunger's gone ; but even before, I was
 At point to seek for food. But what is this ? [Seeing a cave.
 Here is a path to't—'Tis some savage hold ;
 It were best not call—I dare not call—Yet famine,
 Ere clean it o'er-throw nature, makes it valiant—
 Plenty and peace breed cowards ; hardness ever
 Of hardness is mother.*

A C T IV. S C E N E III.

There is a true spirit of natural bravery expressed here. When Cloten meets Guiderius in the forest, and challenges him to yield himself a prisoner, he replies,

To whom ? To thee ! What art thou ? Have not I
 An arm as big as thine ? A heart as big ?
 Thy words, I grant, are bigger ; *for I wear not
 My dagger in my mouth—Say, what thou art,
 Why I should yield to thee.*

Cloten. Art not afraid ?

Guiderius. *Those that I reverence, those I fear, the wise—
 At fools I laugh, not fear them.*

* Tedious, for fatiguing.

S C E N E IV.

After *Guiderius* has slain *Cloten* in fight, his brother *Arviragus* says he envies him the action, and wishes for some such trial of danger to exercise his own spirit upon. On this occasion old *Bellarius* makes the following reflection :

O thou goddess,
Thou divine Nature, how thyself thou blazon'st,
In these two princely boys ! They are as gentle,
As zephyrs blowing beneath the violet,
Not wagging his sweet head ; and yet as rough,
Their royal blood enchas'd, *as th' rudest wind,*
That by the top doth take the mountain pine,
And make him stoop to th' vule. 'Tis wonderful,
That an invisable instinct should frame them
To royalty unlearn'd, honour untaught,
Civility not seen from other ; valour
That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop,
As if it had been sowed,

The notion here expressed, is one of the many antient pieces of superstition that modern philosophy has finally destroyed. The lion has long since lost its instinct for princes, as well as for virgins. Human nature is the same throughout ; it is education alone that distinguishes man from man. There are, indeed, great differences often observable between the talents and intellects of the species ; but this distinction is remarked in *individuals*, only, not in the *classes* of mankind.

S C E N E V.

But though I dispute the argument of *Bellarius* in the last Scene, I allow him perfectly right in this one, where, on giving order for the funeral of *Cloten*, he says,

He was a queen's son, boys ;
And though he came our enemy, remember,
He was paid for that ; though mean and mighty, rotting
Together, have one dust, *yet reverence,*
*That angel of the world *, doth make distinction*
Of place 'twixt high and low. Our foe was princely,

* *Reverence*, or a due regard to subordination, keeps peace and order in the world. Johnson.

And though you took his life, as being our foe,
Yet bury him as a prince.

*

*

*

As I do not meet with any thing further in this Play, for my purpose, except a few thoughts which are better expressed in former places already taken notice of, I shall here conclude my quotations and remarks on this Piece.

T R O I L U S

A N D

C R E S S I D A.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

AGAMEMNON.

NESTOR.

ULYSSES.

ACHILLES.

ÆNEAS.

ALEXANDER, Squire to Cressida.

W O M E N.

CRESSIDA.

TROIUS and CRESSIDA.

A C T I. S C E N E III.

THE description of Ajax in this Play is worth transcribing, as being humorous in itself, agreeing with the representation of him in the Iliad, and because it may be applied also in part to many, and in the whole to a few, medley characters that are frequently to be met with in life.

Alexander to Cressida.

This man, lady, hath robbed many beasts of their particular addition. He is as valiant as the lion, churlish as the bear, slow as the elephant; a man, into whom Nature hath so crowded humours, that his valour is crusted into folly, his folly sauced with discretion; there is no man hath a virtue, that he has not a glimpse of; nor any man an attain, but he carries some stain of it. He is melancholy without cause, and merry against the hair; he hath the joints of every thing, but every thing so out of joint, that he is a gouty *Briareus*, many hands, and no use; or purblind *Argus*, all eyes, and no sight.

S C E N E IV.

Cressida's speech here, in reference to her wooer Troilus, contains very just reflections and prudent maxims for the conduct of women, in the dangerous circumstance of love. What she says, would become the utterance of the most virtuous matron, though her own character in this piece is unluckily a bad one. But our Author's genius seemed so fertile in document, that he was unable to restrain its impulse, and coolly wait for a fit opportunity of adapting the speaker to the speech. Shakespeare's faults arise from richness, not from poverty; they exceed, not fall short; his monsters never want a head, but have sometimes two.

Yet hold I off--Women are angels wooing?
Things won are done; joy's soul lies in the doing.

I i †

That

That she beloved knows nought that knows not this,
 Men prize the thing ungained more than it is.
 That she * was never yet, that ever knew
 Love got so sweet, as when desire did sue;
 'Therefore, this maxim out of love I teach,
Attainment is command; ungained, beseech †.
 'Then though my heart's content || firm love doth bear,
 Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear.

SCENE V.

The following dialogue can hardly be thought too long, by those Readers who carefully attend to the several admirable reflections comprehended in it, upon the dilatory nature of great events, the necessity of patience and fortitude, with the expediency of deference and obedience to order and authority.

A Council held in the Grecian Camp.

Agamemnon. Princes,

What grief hath set the jaundice on your cheeks?
 The ample proposition that hope makes,
 In all designs begun on earth below,
 Fails in the promised largeness. Checks and disasters
 Grow in the veins of actions highest reared;
 As knots by the conflux of meeting sap,
 Infect the sound pine, and divert his grain,
 Tortive and errant from his course of growth.
 Nor, princes, is it matter new to us,
 That we come short of our suppose, so far,
 That after seven years siege, yet *Troy* walls stand;
 Sith every action that hath gone before,
 Whereof we have record, trial did draw.
 Bias and thwart, not answering the aim,
 And that *unbodied figure of the thought*,
 That gave't furnished shape. Why, then, ye princes,
 Do you with cheeks abashed behold our works?
 And think them shame, which are, indeed, nought else
But the protractive trials of great love,
To find persuasive constancy in man?
 The fineness of which metal is not found
 In fortune's love; for then the bold and coward,
 The wise and fool, the artist and unread,
 The hard and soft, seem all affined, and kin;
 But in the wind and tempest of her frown,

* *That she*, that is, the woman.
 Warburton.

† For beseeching.

|| Content, for capacity.

Distinction, with a broad and powerful fan,
Puffing at all, winnows the light away ;
And what hath mass or matter by itself,
Lies rich in virtue, and unmingled.

Nestor. In the reproof of chance

Lies the true proof of men. The sea being smooth,
How many shallow bauble boats dare sail
Upon her patient breast, making their way
With those of nobler bulk ?
But let the ruffian *Boreas* once enrage
The gentle *Thetis*, and, anon, behold
The strong-ribb'd bark, thro' liquid mountains cut,
Bounding between the two moist elements,
Like *Perseus'* horse *. Where's then the saucy boat,
Whose weak untimber'd sides but even now
Co-rivall'd greatness ?—Or to harbour fled,
Or made a toast for *Neptune*. Even so
Doth valour's shew, and valour's worth divide,
In storms of fortune ; for in her ray and brightness,
The herd hath more annoyance by the brize †
Than by the tyger ; but when splitting winds
Make flexible the knees of knotted oaks,
And flies get under shade, why then, the thing of courage ‡,
As roused with rage, with rage doth sympathize,
And with an accent tuned in self-same key,
Returns to chiding fortune.

Ulysses. Troy, yet upon her basis, had been down,
And the great *Hector's* sword had lack'd a master,
But for these instances.

The speciality of rule hath been neglected ;
And look how many *Grecian* tents do stand
Hollow upon this plain, *so many hollow factions.*
When that the general is not like the hive,
To whom the foragers shall all repair,
What honey is expected ? Degree being vizarded,
The unworthiest shews as fairly in the mask.
The heavens themselves, the planets, and this center,
Observe degree, priority and place,
Institute, course, proportion, season, form,
Office and custom, in all line of order.
And therefore is the glorious planet *Sol*
In noble eminence enthroned and sphered
Amidst the rest, whose med'cinable eye
Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil,

* When he rode through the air and clouds to rescue *Andromeda*.

† Brize, the gad-fly.

‡ Sir Thomas Hanmer says, from his own authority, that tygers are fiercest in high winds.

And poſts, like the commandment of a king,
 Sans check to good or bad. But when the planets
 In evil mixture to diſorder wander,
 What plagues, and what portents, what mutiny ?
 What raging of the ſea, ſhaking of earth,
 Commotion in the winds, frights, changes, horrors.
 Diveſt and crack, rend and deracinate
 The unity and married calm of ſtates,
 Quite from their fixture ? So when *degree* is ſhaken,
 Which is the ladder to all high deſigns,
 Then enterprize is ſick. How could communities,
 Degrees in ſchools, and || brotherhoods in cities,
 Peaceful commerce from dividable ſhores,
 The primogeniture and due of birth,
 Prerogative of age, crowns, ſcepters, laurels,
 But by degree, ſtand in authentic place ?
 Take but degree away, untune that ſtring,
 And hark what diſcord follows ! Each thing meets
 In mere oppugnancy. The bounded waters
 Should liſt their boſoms higher than the ſhores,
 And make a ſop of all this ſolid globe ;
 Strength ſhould be lord of imbecillity,
 And the rude ſon ſhould ſtrike his father dead ;
 Force ſhould be right ; or rather right and wrong,
 Between whoſe endleſs jar juſtice reſides,
 Should loſe their names ; and ſo ſhould juſtice too.
 Then every thing include itſelf in power,
 Power into will, will into appetite ;
 And appetite, an univerſal wolf,
 So doubly ſeconded with will and power,
 Muſt make, perforce, an univerſal prey,
 And laſt eat up itſelf. Great *Agamemnon*,
 This chaos, when degree is ſuffocate,
 Follows the choking ;
 And this neglection of degree is it,
 That by a pace goes backward, with a purpoſe
 It has to climb. The general's diſdained
 By him one ſtep below ; he, by the next ;
 That next, by him beneath ; ſo every ſtep,
 Exempl'd by the firſt pace that is ſick
 Of his ſuperior, grows to an envious fever
 Of pale and bloodleſs † emulation.
 And 'tis this fever that keeps *Troy* on foot,
 Not her own ſinews. To end a tale of length,
Troy in our weakneſs lives, not in her ſtrength.

|| Corporate bodies.

† *Bloodleſs*, more malignant than active.

To which Ulysses, further on in the same Scene, adds,

They tax our policy, and call it cowardice;
 Count wisdom as no member of the war;
 Foretell our prescience, and esteem no act
 But that of hand—The still and mental parts,
 That do contrive how many hands shall strike,
 When fitness calls them on, and know the measure,
 By their observant toil, of th' enemy's weight;
 Why this hath not a finger's dignity;
 They call this bed-work, mappery, closet-war—
 So that the ram, that batters down the wall,
 For the great swing and rudeness of its poize,
 They place before his hand that made the engine;
 Or those, that with the fierceness of their souls,
 By reason guide its execution.

May I venture here to challenge any thing in the Iliad, where the same argument is deliberated upon by the same chiefs, (with Homer's gods to assist their counsels) to equal the justness of observation, the richness of imagery, and the copiousness of reflection, presented to us in this resplendent passage? But, as I said before, on a comparison between Shakespeare and Sophocles, 'tis enough to determine the literary critics against me, that *one had written in English, and the other in Greek.*

SCENE VI.

In this place is given us a specimen of the antient chivalry, as first inspired by love and galantry, and exercised in honour or defence of women. *Æneas*, attended by an herald, bringing a challenge from *Hector*, to any champion in the *Grecian* camp who will accept it, delivers himself thus:

Kings, princes, lords!
 If there be one amongst the fair'st of *Greece*,
 That holds his honour higher than his ease,
 That seeks his praise more than he fears his peril,
 That knows his valour, and knows not his fear,
 That loves his mistress more than in profession
 With truant vows to her own lips he loves,
 And dare avow her beauty and her worth,
 In other arms than hers; to him this challenge—
Hector, in view of *Trojans* and of *Greeks*,

Shall

Shall make it good, or do his best to do it.
 He hath a lady, wiser, fairer, truer,
 Than ever *Greek* did compass in his arms;
 And will, to-morrow, with his trumpet, call,
 Midway between your tents and wall of *Troy*,
 To rouse a *Grecian* that is true in love—
 If any come, *Hector* shall honour him;
 If none, he'll say in *Troy*, when he retires,
 The *Grecian* dames are sun-burned, and not worth
 The splinter of a lance. Even so much.

To which *Agamemnon* replies :

This shall be told our lovers, lord *Aeneas*—
 If none of them have soul in such a kind,
 We've left them all at home. But we are soldiers;
 And may that soldier a mere recreant prove,
 That means not, hath not, or is not in love!
 If then one is, or hath, or means to be,
 That one meets *Hector*—if none else, I'm he.

Old *Nestor*'s speech upon this occasion is well worth adding here, both for the humour of his expressions, and to compleat the idea of *knight-errantry*, in which profession of arms, neither difference of age, or other imparity whatsoever, were allowed to be pleaded as exemptions, by the laws of such romantic chivalry,

Tell him of *Nestor*; one that was a man
 When *Hector*'s grandfire suckt; he is old now,
 But if there be not in our *Grecian* host
 One noble man that hath one spark of fire,
 To answer for his love; tell him from me,
 I'll hide my silver beard in a gold beaver,
 And in my vantbrace * put this withered brawn,
 And, meeting him, will tell him that my lady
 Was fairer than his grandam, and as chaste
 As may be in the world—His youth in flood,
 I'll pawn this truth with my three drops of blood.

ACT II. SCENE VIII.

The last passage in this Scene contains a good stricture against pride, though somewhat too quaintly expressed, in the first and last part of the proposition.

* *Vantbrace*, a shield or buckler.

Agamemnon. He that is proud, eats up himself. Pride is his own glass, his own trumpet, his own chronicle; and whatever praises itself but in the deed, devours the deed in the praise.

Of all the faults of men, their pride is apt to give us most offence; perhaps because it hurts our own *.

ACT III. SCENE VII.

The following speech may very well take *Ecce mundum* for its motto, as 'tis full of melancholy and mortifying truths. But I don't think the philosophic and humiliating reflections it contains, become the character of the speaker, as given us by Homer. Achilles, on seeing the Grecian chiefs pass by his tent without taking notice of him, says to Patroclus,

What! am I poor of late?

'Tis certain, greatness once fallen out with fortune,
Must fall out with men too; what the declined is,
He shall as soon read in the eyes of others,
As feel in his own fall; for men, like butterflies,
Shew not their mealy wings but to the summer;
And not a man, for being simply man,
Hath any honour, but honour by those honours
That are without him; as place, riches, favour;
Prizes of accident, as oft as merit!
Which when they fall, as being slipp'ry standers,
The love that leaned on them as slipp'ry too,
Doth one pluck down another, and together
Die in the fall.

In the latter end of the same Scene, the investigating faculties necessary for a Minister, with the *arcana imperii*, or mysteries of government, are strongly and poetically described.

Ulysses. The providence that's in a watchful state,
Knows almost every grain of Pluto's gold †:
Finds bottom in th' incomprehensive deep;
Keeps place with thought; and almost, like the gods,
Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles.
There is a mystery, with which relation ||
Durst never meddle, in the soul of state;
Which hath an operation more divine,
Than breath or pen can give expressure to.

* I am not sure but this has been said by somebody else before.

† Acquainted with all the resources of trade, commerce, or finances.

|| Recital, explanation, or comment.

R O M E O

A N D

J U L I E T.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

ROMEO.

BENVOLIO.

FRIAR LAWRENCE.

W O M E N.

NONE.

ROMEO and JULIET.

WERE it my province to have selected the poetical beauties of our Author, there are few of his Plays that would have furnished me more amply than this. The language abounds with tenderness and delicacy, and seems to breathe the soul of youthful fondness; but neither the fable nor the dialogue can afford much assistance toward my present purpose; as the first is founded on a vicious prejudice unknown to the liberal minds of Britons, that of entailing family feuds and resentments down from generation to generation; and the second, as far, at least, as the lovers are concerned, though poetical and refined, is dictated more by passion than by sentiment.

But as my young Readers might not forgive my passing over this Play unnoticed, I shall just observe, that the catastrophe of the unhappy lovers seems intended as a kind of moral, as well as poetical justice, for their having ventured upon an unweighed engagement together, without the concurrence and consent of their parents. See my reflection on the first Scene, Act I. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where this duty and obedience is both enforced and restrained.

ACT I. SCENE II.

The first passage worthy of remark that occurs, is the following definition or description of that passion, which, with respect to the generality of mankind, frames the happiness or misery of their lives.

Romeo and Benvolio.

Benvolio. Alas that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!

E k

Romeo.

Romeo. Why then, O brawling love ! O loving hate !
 Oh, any thing of nothing first create !
 O heavy lightness ! serious vanity !
 Misshapen Chaos of well-seeming forms !
 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health !
 Still waking sleep, that is not what it is !
 Love is a smoke, raised with the fume of sighs,
 Being purged, a fire sparkling in lover's eyes ;
 Being vext, a sea nourish'd with lover's tears—
 What is it else ? A madness most discreet,
 A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.

ACT II. SCENE III.

The allegory here, drawn from a comparison of the qualities of herbs with the nature of man, is just, ingenious, and poetical.

Enter Friar Lawrence, with a basket, in order to cull simples for medicinal uses.

The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
 Check'ring the eastern clouds with streaks of light ;
 And darkness fleckered, like a drunkard reels,
 From forth day's path, and *Titan's* burning wheels.
 Now ere the sun advance his burning eye,
 The day to cheer, and night's dank dew to dry,
 I must fill up this osier-cage of ours
 With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers.
 The earth, that's Nature's mother, is her tomb ;
 What is her burying grave, that is her womb ;
 And from her womb children of divers kind,
 We sucking on her natural bosom find ;
 Many for many virtues excellent,
 None but for some, and yet all different.
 O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies
 In plants, herbs, stones, and their true qualities !
 Nor nought so vile, that on the earth doth live,
 But to the earth some special good doth give ;
 Nor aught so good, but, strained from that fair use,
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
 And vice sometimes by action's dignified.
 Within the infant rind of this small flower,
 Poison hath residence, and medicine power ;
 For this being smelt, with that sense cheers each part ;
 Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
Two such opposed fess encamp them still,
In man, as well as herbs, grace and rude will ;

And

And where the worser is predominant,
Full-soon the canker death eats up that plant.

In the same Scene, when *Romeo* comes to acquaint the *Friar* that his former flame for the fair *Rosaline* is extinct *, and a new one, for *Juliet*, like another *phœnix*, had arisen out of its ashes, the honest priest thus exclaims :

Holy *St. Francis*, what a change is here !
Is *Rosaline*, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken ? Young men's love then lies,
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.
Holy *St. Francis* ! What a deal of brine
Hath washed thy fallow cheeks for *Rosaline* !
How much salt-water thrown away in waste
To season love, that of it doth not taste !
The sun not yet thy sighs from Heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in my antient ears ;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear, that is not washed off yet—
If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for *Rosaline*.
And art thou changed ? Pronounce this sentence, then,
Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

With this very just reflection I shall here conclude my notes upon this Play ; the remainder of it affording but little matter for further observation, being mostly action, narration, and confusion. But if my Readers should require some apology to be made for the quick conception of passion in the character of *Juliet*, I must refer them to my Preface to Scene IV. Act I. of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

* This hint of *Romeo's* infidelity is left out, in the modern representation of this Play.

H A M L E T.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HAMLET.
KING.
POLONIUS.
LAERTES.
HORATIO.
ROSINCRANTZ.
REYNOLDQ.

W O M E N.

QUEEN.
OPHELIA.
PLAYERS.

H A M L E T.

A C T I. S C E N E II.

IF reasoning could controul our grief, the King and Queen offer sufficient arguments to Hamlet, in this Scene, to moderate his.

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eyes look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy veiled lids,
Seek for thy noble father in the dust :
Thou know'st 'tis common ; all that live must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

The King then takes up the subject, and enlarges on it.

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father ;
But you must know your father lost a father,
That father his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term,
To do obsequious * sorrow. But to persevere
In obstinate condolment †, is a course
Of impious stubbornness, unmanly grief ;
It shews a will most incorrect to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd ;
For what we know must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart ? Fie ! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd ; whose common theme
Is death of fathers ; and who still have cryed,
From the first corse 'till he that died to-day,
This must be so.

* The word here is framed from *obsequies*, or *funeral rites*. Johnson.

† *Condolment*, for *sorrow*, because it requires *condolment*. Warburton.

S C E N E V.

In this Scene, Laertes gives most excellent advice and *matronly* caution to his sister, upon the subject of Hamlet's addresses to her.

For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent ; tho' sweet, not lasting ;
The perfume and suppliance of a minute—
No more. . . . Think it no more.
For Nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews * and bulk ; but as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now ;
And now no foil nor cautel † doth besmirch
The virtue of his will ; but you must fear. . . .
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs ;
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmastered importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia ; fear it, my dear sister ;
*And keep within the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon ;
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes ;
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons ‡ be disclosed ;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth,
Contagious blastments are most eminent—
Be wary, then, best safety lies in fear ;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.*

S C E N E VI.

Polonius, on his son's going to travel, gives him admirable rules and instructions for his conduct in life.

My blessing with you ;
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar ;

* *Thews and bulk*, synonymous.

† *Cautel*. This word, from the Latin *cautela*, signifies simply *caution*, but by the abuse of language is brought here to mean *decent*.

‡ *Buttons*, the buds, or germens of a plant.

The friends thou hast, and their adoption tryed,
 Grapple them to thy soul with clasps of steel,
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
 Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,
 Bear 't that th' opposer may beware of thee.
 Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice ;
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
 But not expressed in fancy ; rich, not gaudy ;
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man.
 Neither a borrower, nor a lender be ;
 For borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry,
 And loan oft loses both itself and friend *.
This above all—To thine own self be true ;
And it must follow, as the light the day †,
Thou can'st not then be false to any man.

In the continuation of this Scene, *Polonius* renews the same topic with his daughter, that her brother had begun with her in the former, which is urged with higher authority, and enforced by additional arguments. I shall give the dialogue as it stands.

Polonius. What is't, Ophelia, *he* hath said to you ? [*Laertes.*

Ophelia. So please you, something touching the lord *Hamlet.*

Polonius. Marry, well bethought !

'Tis told me he hath very oft, of late,
 Given private time to you ; and you yourself
 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
 If it be so, as so 'tis put on me,
 And that in way of caution, I must tell you,
 You do not understand yourself so clearly,
 As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
 What is between you, give me up the truth.

Ophelia. He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders
 Of his affection to me.

Polonius. Affection ! Pugh ! you speak like a green girl,
 Unfitted in such perilous circumstance.
 Do you believe his *tenders*, as you call them ?

Ophelia. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Polonius. Marry, I'll teach you. Think yourself a baby,
 That you have ta'en his *tenders* for true pay,

* I have ventured to transpose these two lines, to avoid confusion in the argument.

† The text says the *night* the day—Warburton has made the alteration, much to the advantage of the passage.

Which are not sterling. *Tender* yourself more dearly ;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus) you'll *tender* me a fool.

Ophelia. My lord, he hath importuned me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Polonius. Ay, fashion you may call 't—Go to, go to.

Ophelia. And hath giv'n countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of Heaven.

Polonius. *Ay, springs to catch woodcocks.* I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows. These blazes, oh my daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Ev'n in the promise as it is a making,
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scantier of thy maiden presence,
Set your intreatments at an higher rate,
Than a command to parley. For lord *Hamlet*,
Believe so much in him, that he is young ;
And with a larger tether * he may walk,
Than may be given you. In few, *Ophelia*,
Do not believe his vows ; for they are brokers,
Not of that die which their investments shew,
But mere implorers of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds †,
The better to beguile. This is for all—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the lord *Hamlet*.
Look to't, I charge you.

S C E N E VII.

I shall here quote what *Hamlet* says against the
vice of drinking, as it may suit the latitude of
England, as well as that of Denmark.

Horatio. Is it a custom ?

Hamlet. Ay, marry, is 't :

But, to my mind, though I am native here,
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honoured in the breach, than the observance.
'This *heavy-headed revel*, east and west,
Makes us traduced, and taxed of other nations ;

* With a freer scope.

† *Bawds*, instead of *bands*. Theobald. This alteration gives an obvious
sense to the passage, and saves the expence of a comment, with which a text
should never be encumbered, unless it may be otherwise be rendered intelligible.

They

They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our addition; and, indeed, it takes
 From our achievements, though performed at height,
 The pith and marrow of our attribute*.

From hence the speaker takes occasion to extend his reflection into a general observation, which most people's experience may enable them to support, that some accidental peculiarity of mind, of manners, nay, even of features, have often hurt the characters, and marred the fortunes of particular persons of intrinsic worth and merit.

So, oft it chanceth in particular men,
 That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
 As, in their birth, wherein they are not guilty,
 Since nature cannot chuse his origin,
 By the o'er-growth of some complexion †,
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
 Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
 The form of plausive manners; that these men
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's scar,
 Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo,
 Shall in the general censure take corruption,
 From that particular fault. *The dram of base
 Doth all the noble substance of worth out,
 To his own scandal ‡.*

S C E N E VIII.

There is something extremely remarkable and pleasing, in the following part of the Ghost's speech to Hamlet, here.

But howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to Heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge
 To prick and sting her.

* As our natural bravery is often imputed to our *pot-walianty*.

† Constitutional predominance.

‡ I shall leave the Reader to interpret this last passage to himself; for though Theobald has amended the text, so as to hint the meaning, the sense of it is still left imperfect in the expression.

He repeats the same fond caution to him, again, in Act III. Scene X.

But, look! Amazement on thy mother sits;
O step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works—
Speak to her, *Hamlet*.

No Eastern sentiment inspired by the first beams of the Sun, and refined by the sublimest morality of Confucius, ever rose to so high a pitch, as the tenderness expressed in these two passages toward his wife—even after her crimes. Have either the Greek or Latin masters of the Epic afforded us so beautiful an instance of forgiveness, and of love subsisting even beyond the grave? They have both of them presented us with scenes after death; but compare the behaviour of *Dido* upon meeting *Aeneas* in the Elysian fields, with this, as being the most parallel passage I can recollect. He had not been any thing near so culpable towards her, as this queen had been to her husband; and yet the utmost temper that the *heathen* Poet could bring his Ghost to, upon that occasion, was merely to be silent, and not upbraid, *in speech*; though he makes her sufficiently mark her repentment, by her *looks and behaviour*.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Here *Polonius* gives some instructions to a person he is sending over to carry money to his son at Paris; in which, though he requires him to sift narrowly into the manner of life, company, and conversation of *Laertes*, yet he does it with so becoming a tenderness and parental respect to the character of the young man, as is extremely interesting and engaging.

Polonius and Reynoldo.

Polonius. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynoldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour,

Reynoldo.

Reynoldo. My lord, I did intend it.

Polonius. Marry, well said—very well said—Look you, Sir,
Inquire me first, what *Daners* * are in Paris—
And how, and who—what means—and where they keep :
What company ; at what expence ; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more near ;
Then your particular demands will touch it—
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him ;
As thus : I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him—Do you mark this, Reynoldo ?

Reynoldo. Ay, very well, my lord.

Polonius. And, in part, him—But you may say, not well ;
But if 't be he I mean, he 's very wild ;
Addicted so and so—And there put on him
What forgeries you please—Marry, none so rank,
As may dishonour him—Take heed of that—
But, Sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips,
As are companions noted, and most known
To youth and liberty.

S C E N E II.

Polonius. It seems, it is as proper to our age,
To cast beyond ourselves, in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion.

Upon this reflection Doctor Johnson says, "*This is not the remark of a weak man.*" It is not, indeed ; but why should *Polonius* be deemed so ? He certainly speaks very good sense, throughout, though with the natural and *respectable* mixture of the old man in it ; which, methinks, as Addison says of *Cornaro's* † style, is an improvement to it. As to the manner in which he describes Hamlet's madness, in Scene IV. following, I take it to be only designed by *Shakespeare* in ridicule of the old pedantic mode of definitions, or quaint distinctions, in logic and philosophy ; the *categories*, *predicaments*, and *predicables* of the *Schools*, used in those times. There are

* *Danes.*

† He wrote a treatise on *bealib and long life*, at fourscore, commended in the *Spectator*, No. 195.

many instances of the same oblique strictures, upon other subjects, in our Author; I have, therefore, ever thought this character mistaken, and consequently misrepresented on the Stage, by its being generally given to a comic actor.

A C T III. S C E N E II.

The famous soliloquy of Hamlet, here, *To be, or not to be*, is so generally remembered, and has been so often remarked upon, that I might possibly be thought guilty of a neglect, in passing it by without a comment. But the subject is a hazardous one, and therefore had better not be meddled with. It might, perhaps, bear a discussion in philosophy, but religion forbids any manner of debate upon it.

S C E N E III.

Shakespeare not only affords documents to real life, but supplies them even to the mimic one; as may be seen in this Scene, where he makes *Hamlet* give instructions to Actors how they should perform their parts. But as there is no moral to be extracted from the passage, I shall not quote it here.

But all these rules, however excellent in themselves, may be considered rather as strictures on bad performers, than precepts for their reformation. Actors, like Poets, must be born, not made; and a receipt to form an Actor, may be considered in the same light with the one to frame an Epic poem. It is not so much from want of notion, as of Nature, that so many of the *Dramatis Personæ* are found to be deficient in the expression of sentiment, and representation of character.

Talents are as necessary to Actors, as Genius is to Authors; if I may be allowed such a distinction of terms—but neither are to be acquired in the schools. All Mr. Garrick's art, without his nature, would produce no effect, as may be seen in the many who have

have *laboriously*, but vainly attempted to copy him. I have known persons capable of writing a part, who were incapable of performing it. Our Author himself was an instance of this inconsistency ; who, though he formed the *rule*, could not supply the *example*.

S C E N E VI.

In the Strollers' play here introduced, where the Lady is said *to protest too much*, the speech which the Duke her husband makes upon that occasion, shews a perfect knowledge in the mind and manners of human nature.

I do believe you think what now you speak ;
 But what we do determine oft we break ;
 Purpose is but the slave of memory,
 Of violent birth, but poor validity ;
 Which now, like fruits unripe, sticks on the tree,
 But fall unshaken when they mellow be.
 Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
 To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt* ;
 What to ourselves in passion we propose,
 The passion ending doth the purpose lose ;
 The violence of either grief or joy,
 Their own enactures with themselves destroy.
 Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament,
 Grief joys. joy grieves, on slender accident.
 This world is not for aye, nor is it strange,
 That e'en our loves should with our fortunes change ;
 For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
 Whether love leads fortune, or else fortune love.
 The great man down, you mark his fav'rite flies ;
 'The poor advanced, makes friends of enemies.
*And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,
 For who not needs, shall never lack a friend ;
 And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
 Directly seasons him his enemy.*
 But orderly to end where I begun,
 Our wills and fates do so contrary run,
 That our devices still are over-thrown ;
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.

S C E N E VII.

There is something very affecting in the self-expostulation entered into by *Hamlet*, in this place,

* This sentiment is improperly expressed ; but the meaning of the passage is, that we think we may retract engagements made only to ourselves, without a strain of conscience.

just before he proceeds to hold the conference with his mother :

Soft ; now to my mother—
 O heart, lose not thy nature ; let not ever
 'The soul of *Nero* enter this firm bosom ;
 Let me be cruel *, but not unnatural ;
 I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites ;
 How in my words soever she be shent †,
 To give them seals ‡, never my soul consent !

The filial tenderness here expressed towards her, is in the same generous strain with the conjugal one before taken notice of, in the Ghost's speech ; *But howsoever thou pursuest this act, &c.*

S C E N E VIII.

Upon the king's expressing an apprehension of some commotion in the State, which might arise from *Hamlet's* madness, Rosincrantz makes the following speech :

The single and peculiar life is bound,
 With all the strength and armour of the mind,
 To keep itself from noyance ; but much more,
 That spirit on whose weal depends and rests
 'The lives of many. The cease of majesty
 Dies not alone, but, like a gulph, doth draw
 What's near it with it. 'Tis a massy wheel,
 Fixt on the summit of the highest mount,
 'To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
 Are mortised and adjoined ; which, when it falls,
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Ne'er alone
 Did the king sigh ; but with a general groan.

The reflections in the above speech contain a very just and political moral in them ; which ought to be opposed to all rebellious motions that may ever arise in the minds of a discontented people. If after such a pause of deliberation, it shall fail of producing its proper effect, there must be suffi-

* Cruel, for severe. † Shent, sentenced, or condemned.

‡ To give them warrant or authority to execute justice.

cient cause to suspect, that the private advantage of individuals is more intended than the general one of the community. I do not mean to plead here for the old and justly exploded doctrines of *passive obedience* and *non-resistance*; but only to hint a distinction between reason and resentment, between rebellion and defence.

The following speech in the same Scene will supply its own reflections and morals, without the assistance of a comment.

King. Oh! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven. . . .

Pray, I cannot,
 Though inclination be as sharp as't will ;
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;
 And, like a man to double business bound,
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood ?
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
 To wash it white as snow ? Whereto serves mercy,
 But to confront the visage of offence ?
 And what's in prayer but this twofold force,
 To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
 Or pardoned being down ? Then I'll look up ;
 My fault is past. But, oh ! what form of prayer
 Can serve my turn ? Forgive me my foul murder !
 That cannot be, since I am still possessed
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
 May one be pardoned, and retain th' offence ?
 In the corrupted currents of this world,
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice ;
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law—*But 'tis not so above :*
There is no shuffling ; there the action lies
In his true nature ; and we ourselves compelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then ? What rests ?
 Try what repentance can. *What can it not ?*
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent * ?
 Oh wretched state ! O bosom, black as death !
 Oh limed soul, that struggling to be free,
 Art more engaged ! Help, angels ! make assay !

* That is, shew their penitence sincere by making *resistution*.

Bow, stubborn knees ! and heart, with strings of steel,
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe !
 All may be well — [Kneels.

After some time he rises, and says,
 My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :
 Words without thoughts will ne'er to Heaven go.

S C E N E X.

In the latter end of the conference between Hamlet and his mother, he makes a speech, upon the power of custom, which should be engraved on our hearts, and be the matin soliloquy of our lives.

Good night ; but go not to mine uncle's bed !
 Assume a virtue, if you have it not :
That monster custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's dewil, is angel yet in this ;
That to the use of actions fair and good,
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain, to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence ; the next, more easy ;
For use can almost change the stamp of nature,
And master ev'n the devil ; or throw him out,
With wond'rous potency.

A C T IV. S C E N E IV.

The following speech of Hamlet contains a very philosophic reflection, and is the proper sentiment of men who are not *brutes* in their nature, and deserve to perish like them.

What is a man,
 If his chief good and market of his time,
 Be but to sleep and feed ? A *beast*, no more.
*Sure he that made us with such large discourse *,*
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason,
To fust in us unused.

S C E N E V.

When the Queen suffers Ophelia in her madness to be admitted to her presence, lest her pitiable con-

* With such investigating powers and faculties of reasoning.

dition might raise a tumult in the city, she makes this soliloquy :

Let her come in—

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss ;
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself, in fearing to be spilt ‡.

ACT V. SCENE IV.

Here follows the description of an obsequious, empty, but imposing character, such as is frequently to be met with in life ; mostly in Courts, or among those who, by a modern unmeaning title, are stiled, *The Ton*—*Vox et præterea nihil* ¶.

Hamlet, speaking of Ofrick,

He did compliment with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he, and many more of the same breed, that I know the drossy age dotes on, only got the *tune* of the time, and outward habit of encounter ; a kind of yesty * collection, which carries them thro' and thro' the most fanned and winnowed opinions ; and do but blow them to their trials, the bubbles are out.

In the same Scene, just before his going to engage with Laertes on the trial of skill, Hamlet hints at one of those *forebodings* frequent in the human mind, and already remarked upon in former places.

Hamlet to Horatio.

Thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart—But 'tis no matter.

Horatio. Nay, my good lord.

Hamlet. It is but foolery ; but it is such a kind of gain-giving §, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Horatio. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

‡ A tainted conscience, as the proverb says, in other words, is apt to betray itself.

¶ Virtue and vice, sense and folly, are the only just, natural, or adequate differences in mankind. These made the first distinctions between men, and ought still to preserve them.

* From *yeft*, or *barm*. In general, it means *spumy* or *frothy*.

§ Gain-giving for *misgiving*. A most extraordinary kind of *synonima*, and only met with here.

To which the gallant Hamlet replies, with a manly and philosophic spirit,

Hamlet. Not a whit ; we defy augury. *There is a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow* *. If it be now, 'tis not to come ; if it be not to come, it will be now ; if it be not now, yet it will come ; *the readiness is all*. Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes ?

This is, in my opinion, a much better speech than the one that Julius Cæsar makes, in our Author's Play under that title :

“ *Corwards die many times before their death, &c.*”

P O S T S C R I P T.

Shaftsbury, speaking of Hamlet, says, “ That piece of Shakespeare's, which appears to have most affected English hearts, and has, perhaps, been ofteneft acted of any that have come upon our stage, is almost one continued moral ; a series of deep reflections drawn from *one* mouth, upon the subject of *one* single accident and calamity, naturally fitted to move horror and compassion.

“ It may be said of this Play, if I mistake not, that it has properly but *one* character, or principal part. It contains no adoration or flattery of *the* *Jex* ; no ranting at the gods ; no blustering heroism ; nor any thing of that curious mixture of the fierce and tender, which makes the hinge of modern tragedy, and nicely varies it between the points of *love and honour*.”

* Pope seems to have borrowed a hint from this passage, where he says, speaking of Providence,

“ Who sees with equal eye, as Lord of all,

“ A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,”

O T H E L L O.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Duke of Venice.

OTHELLO.

CASSIO.

IAGO.

BRABANTIO.

RODORIGO.

W O M E N.

DESDEMONA.

ÆMILIA.

O T H E L L O.

SHAKESPEARE has written three pieces on the subject of jealousy; the *Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, and this one, besides the character of Ford, in the *Merry Wives*. But such was the richness of his genius, that he has not borrowed a single thought, image, or expression, from any one of them, to assist him in any of the others. The subject seems rather to have grown progressively out of itself, to have inspired its own sentiments, and have dictated its own language. This Play, in my opinion, is very justly considered as the last and greatest effort of our Author's genius, and may, therefore, be looked upon as the *chef d'œuvre* of dramatic composition.

How perfectly does Othello's conduct throughout, correspond with Iago's description of it in the latter end of the First Act !

The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest, who but seem to be so.

Such a character is not uncommon in life ; whose virtues, arising more from an excellence of nature, than an exertion of philosophy, is led to judge of others by itself, and of course become the dupe of art and villainy.

A C T I. S C E N E IV.

Othello here expresses a very just and liberal sense of a matrimonial connection.

But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription, and confine,
For the sea's worth.

The argument between philosophy and feeling, in cases of misfortune or grief, is well debated here. The Duke, preaching patience to the father, upon his daughter's elopement with the Moor, says,

Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best.
Men do their broken weapons rather use,
Than their bare hands.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,
By seeing the worst, which late on hope depended ;
To mourn a mischief that is lost and gone,
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved, when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes ;
The robbed that smiles steals something from the thief ;
He robs himself who spends a bootless grief.

Brabantio. So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile,
We lose it not so long as we can smile.
He bears the sentence well, who nothing bears,
But the free comfort which from thence he hears* ;
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
That to pay grief must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences to sugar or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal.
But words are words. I never yet did hear,
That the bruised heart was healed through the ear.

I may possibly be reprehended, by some severe moralists, for noting the equipoise of such an argument as this. In this instance, indeed, I confess that I act contrary to the usual tenor of document, which always takes part on the *wise* side of a question. But, as I have said before †, I do not think that ethic philosophy can ever be a gainer, by overstraining the sinews of the human mind. We ought neither to be votaries to the Cynic nor the Stoic sects. We should not, with Diogenes, *follow Nature* in the mere animal sense of the expression, nor with Zeno fly beyond it, in the metaphysical one. True

* Alluding to the homily usually made by a judge, on passing sentence.

† Last Part of Postscript to Julius Cæsar, with other passages referred to in the Notes.

virtue has no extremes. Its sphere extends not beyond the *Temperate Zones*. It sleeps in the Frozen, and but raves in the Torrid ones.

S C E N E X.

I have before observed upon the exuberance of Shakespeare's document and moral. He so much abounds in maxim and reflection, that he appears frequently at a loss to find proper characters, throughout even his own extensive drama, sufficient to parcel them out to; so that he is frequently obliged to make his fools talk sense, and set his knaves a-preaching. An instance of the latter impropriety may be seen in the following passage, which contains both sound philosophy, and useful admonition. But that it may have the better effect on my readers, I wish that whenever they remember the speech, they could contrive to forget the speaker.

Roderigo. What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my *virtue* to amend it.

Iago. Virtue? a fig. 'Tis in ourselves that we are thus, or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners. So that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either have it sterile with idleness, or manured with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our will. If the ballance of our lives had not one scale of reason, to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions.

The plea that Roderigo offers above, for remaining still under the dominion of a lawless passion, is framed upon a fatal error, too prevalent in the world, that *virtue* is a peculiar gift from Heaven, granted *speciali gratia*, as it were, to particular and chosen persons. Hence indolent minds are apt to conclude it a vain task to restrain their passions, or resist their temptations, without the supernatural aid of such an innate endowment. Iago, in his reply, reasons very justly against this dangerous and discouraging doctrine of *partial grace*; in support of which argument I shall here

here add a passage from a modern writer, who, speaking on this subject, says, “ The difficulties we apprehend, more than those we find, in the strife with all our passions, is the only thing that prevents philosophy or virtue from being commonly attainable in general life. What makes the difference between a chaste woman, and a frail one? *The one had struggled, and the other not.* Between a brave man and a coward? *The one had struggled, and the other not.* An honest man and a knave? *One had struggled, the other not *.*”

A C T II. S C E N E XIV.

There is a good deal of after-wit reflection here, which, however, may serve as a forewarning, perhaps, to some of my Readers. Iago seeing Cassio desponding, on being cashiered by Othello, asks if he be hurt? To which he replies,

Cassio. Past all surgery.—Reputation, reputation, reputation! *Oh, I have lost the immortal part of me, and what remains is bestial.* Oh, thou invisible spirit of wine! if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee Devil.——I will ask him for my post again, and he shall tell me I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! Every inordinate cup is unblest, and the ingredient is a devil.

A C T III. S C E N E V.

The following passage will speak for itself :

Iago. Good name, in man or woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.
Who steals my purse, steals trash, 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands :
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor, indeed,

In the same Scene, Othello, while his alarmed mind is struggling between confidence and convic-

tion, delivers himself on the subject with a liberal and manly spirit.

Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy?
 To follow still the changes of the moon,
 With fresh suspicions? No—To be once in doubt,
 Is once to be resolved. Exchange me for a goat,
 When I shall turn the business of my soul
 To such exsufflate* and blown surmises †,
 Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me jealous,
 To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
 Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well;
 Where virtue is, these are most virtuous.
 Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
 The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt.
For she had eyes, and chose me. No, Iago,
 I'll see, before I doubt; when I doubt prove;
 And on the proof there is no more but this,
Away, at once, with love or jealousy.

S C E N E XII.

It has often surprized me, to find the character of Desdemona so much mistaken and slighted, as it too generally is. It is simple, indeed, but that is one of its merits: for the simplicity of it is that of *innocence*, not of *folly*. In my opinion, she seems to be as perfect a model of a wife, as either this author, or any other writer, could possibly have framed. She speaks little; but whatever she says is sensible, pure, and chaste. The remark she makes in this place, on the alteration of Othello's manners towards her, affords a very proper admonition to all women in her situation and circumstances.

Something, sure, of state
 Hath puddled his clear spirit; and, in such cases,
 Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
 Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so—
 For let our finger ake, and it endues
 Our other healthful members with a sense
 Of pain. *Nay, we must think men are not gods;*
Nor of them look for such observance always,
As fits the bridal.

* *Exsufflate*, buzzing.

† He compares these whispered slanders to water-bubbles floating in the air.

She had said to himself before,

Be't as your fancies teach you —
Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

And afterwards, in confessing herself before Iago and Æmilia,

Here I kneel—
 If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
 Or in discourse, or thought, or actual deed,
 Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense
 Delighted them on any other form;
 Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
 And ever will, though he do shake me off
 To beggarly divorcement, love him dearly;
 Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much,
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love.

And further on, where Æmilia says to her, of Othello,

I wish you had never seen him!

She replies,

So would not I. *My love doth so approve him,*
That ev'n his stubbornness, his checks and frowns,
Have grace and favour in them.

As the married state is both the dearest and most social connection of life, I think this a proper passage to conclude my observations with, on a work in which is comprehended the compleatest system of the œconomical and moral duties of human nature, that perhaps was ever framed by the wisdom, philosophy, or experience of *uninspired* man.



GENERAL POSTSCRIPT.

THERE are many favourite passages in Shakespeare, which most of my Readers have got by heart, and missing here, may possibly object to my having neglected to quote or observe upon them, in their proper places. But my intention, in this Work, was not to propound the beauties of the Poet, but to expound the document of the Moralist, throughout his writings.

So far from being insensible to the other excellencies of this Author, I have ever thought him by much the greatest poet of our nation, for sublimity of idea, and beauty of expression. Perhaps I may even think myself guilty of some injustice, in limiting his fame within the narrow confines of these kingdoms; for, upon a comparison with the much venerated names of Antiquity, I am of opinion, that we need not surrender the British Palm, either to the Grecian Bay, or the Roman Laurel, with regard to the principal parts of poetry; as thought, sentiment, or description—And though the dead languages are confessed to be superior to ours, yet even here, in the very article of diction, our Author shall measure his pen with any of the antient styles, in their most admired compound and decompound epithets, descriptive phrases, or figurative expressions. *The multitudinous sea, ear-piercing fife, big war, giddy mast, sky-aspiring, heaven-kissing hill, time-honoured name, cloud-capt towers, heavenly-harnessed team, rash gunpowder, polished perturbation, gracious silence, golden care, trumpet-tongued, thought-executing fires;* with
a number

a number of other words, both epic and comic, are instances of it. But with regard to the moral excellencies of our English *Confucius*, either for beauty or number, he undoubtedly challenges the wreath from the whole collective Host of Greek or Roman Writers, whether ethic, epic, dramatic, didactic, or historic.

Mrs. Montagu says, very justly, that "We are apt to consider Shakespeare only as a poet; but he is certainly one of the greatest moral philosophers that ever lived." And this is true; because, in his universal scheme of doctrine, he comprehends manners, proprieties, and decorums; and whatever relates to these, to personal character, or national description, falls equally within the great line of morals. Horace prefers Homer to all the philosophers,

Qui, quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Pleniùs et meliùs Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

And surely Shakespeare *pleniùs et meliùs* excels him again, as much as the living scene exceeds the dead letter, as action is preferable to didaction, or representation to declamation.

Example is better than precept. A dramatic moral affords us the benefit of both, at once. Plato wished that Virtue could assume a visible form. Dramatic exhibition gives one, both to Virtue and to Vice. The abstract idea is there materialized. The contrast of character, too, affords an additional strength to the moral; as we are led to love virtue, on a double account, by being made to abhor vice, at the same time. The dramatic moralist possesses a manifest advantage over the doctrinal one. Mere descriptions of virtue or vice do not strike us, so strongly, as the visible representations of them. Richard the Third's dream, Lady Macbeth's soliloquy in her sleep, the Dagger Scene in the same Play, Cardinal Beaufort's last moments, with many other passages in our Author, of the same admonitory

tory kind, avail us more than whole volumes of Tully's Offices, or Seneca's Morals.

In this scenic province of instruction, our representations are much better calculated to answer the end proposed, than those of the Antients were, on account of the different hours of exhibition. Theirs were performed in the morning; which circumstance suffered the salutary effect to be worn out of the mind, by the business or avocations of the day. Ours are at night; the impressions accompany us to our couch, supply matter for our latest reflections, and may sometimes furnish the subject of our very dreams.

But Shakespeare seems to have extended his views still further; by frequently interspersing allusions to the Scriptures, throughout his writings. I would not have the old *Mysteries* restored to the Stage, nor should Dramatic Dialogue exceed into Sermons; but I think, that such occasional hints or passages, as this Author has supplied, when thrown in sparingly, and introduced with discretion, may sometimes serve to add a strength and dignity to the stile and subject of such compositions; besides the advantage of producing, perhaps, effects of an higher nature, by calling our attention to more serious reflections, in the very midst of our pleasures and dissipations, without sinking our spirits, or damping our enjoyments; awakening us to the contemplation of a religion so pure, so equally free from the severities of discipline, and the superstitions of devotion; of a system of theology, framed even as Man himself would chuse; in fine, of a faith and doctrine, which has but stronger bound the social ties, given an higher sanction to moral obligations, and proved our duty to be our interest also.

Having now arrived at the last page of my task, I must confess the apprehensions I am sensible of, on presenting to the Public a Work of so much difficulty and danger: though with regard to the first of
these

these articles, I acknowledge this to have been one in the class of those, of which Ferdinand in the *Tempest* says,

There be some sports are painful, but their labour
Delight in them sets off.

But in respect to the latter, I must here throw myself not only upon the candor, but the indulgence of my Readers; hoping that the many failures in the execution may be pardoned, on the single merit of the design.

T H E E N D.

PUBLISHER'S ADVERTISEMENT

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1. 1692 **Thomas Rymer**
A Short View of Tragedy (1693)
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